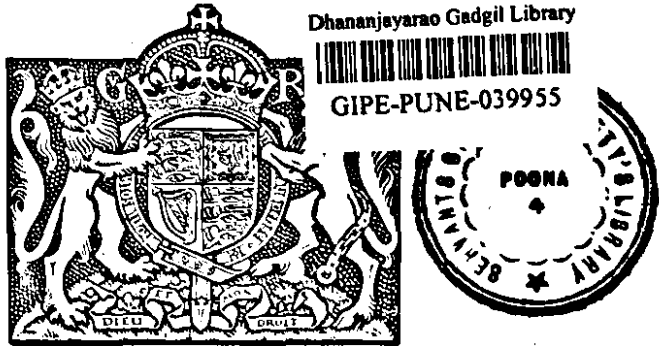


Report on
Markets and Fairs
in
England and Wales

(Part I: General Review)

Economic Series No. 13.

(For list of other Reports, in
this Series, see inside of cover).



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

Report
on
Markets and Fairs
in
England and Wales
(Part I : General Review).

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PREFACE.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, various Royal Commissions were appointed to enquire into the prevailing condition of agriculture, but, in the published reports, little or nothing was said on the subject of markets and marketing. The first special enquiry into markets was that of the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls, which was appointed in 1887 and issued its final report in 1891, but the Commissioners made no attempt to deal with the more general aspects of marketing. The next enquiry was undertaken by a Departmental Committee in 1920, but was limited to the wholesale food markets of London. The appointment of the Linlithgow Committee followed in December, 1922. This Committee surveyed the whole marketing field and its Final Report* contained the following recommendation :—

“ During the course of our enquiry we have been struck by the lack of readily available information regarding the markets of the country. This appears to be due to the fact that there is no general body of legislation on the subject ; many markets owe their origin to early charters, others are controlled by Local Authorities under private Acts of Parliament, while others have been established under the general powers of the Public Health and other Acts. As a result, there is no Government Department which is concerned to consider the relation of local markets to the food supply of the country, their influence on prices, or their general suitability from the point of view either of the consumer or the producer. The Ministry of Health in England and Wales and the Department of Health in Scotland only come into the picture, we understand, in connection with the powers of Local Authorities (mainly in regard to sanitation and finance) as prescribed by certain Acts of Parliament, and cannot deal in any way with the wider aspect of the question to which we have referred above. As a preliminary step to the further consideration of this question, we think it desirable that the Government Departments concerned should collect and publish information as to the control and ownership of markets, and any relative information likely to be useful.”

In furtherance of this recommendation, a survey of the agricultural markets and fairs of England and Wales has been undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in connection with and complementary to its investigations into the marketing of agricultural produce. A knowledge of the markets of the country is essential if the methods of marketing agricultural produce are to be fully understood.

* Cmd. 2008. 1924.

For the purpose of this survey, it has been found convenient to divide the country into areas comprising groups of counties and particulars have been obtained, or are in course of being obtained, of the markets in each group. It is proposed, in due course, to publish Reports in the Economic Series which will present the information so accumulated in a form which will be of value to producers and other users of the markets. Sufficient information is, however, now available regarding markets generally to provide material for the present introductory Report. The general view of markets and market conditions which this Report affords will give perspective to the necessarily more detailed Reports to follow.

It is desired to acknowledge the assistance rendered in connection with this Report by the Northern Market Authorities Association, the Association of Midland Market Authorities, and a number of individuals, including auctioneers and market owners, officers of County Councils, Borough Councils and other local authorities, and of local branches of the National Farmer Union.

MARKETS AND FAIRS IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTORY.*

(i) Historical.

(a) **Definition of a Market.**—In the strict sense of the word, a market is “the franchise right of having a concourse of buyers and sellers to dispose of commodities in respect of which the franchise is given.”†

In addition to this strict or legal sense, the word market is used in two other ways. In a popular sense, it is used to describe any public concourse at an appointed time of buyers and sellers of commodities at a place more or less limited or defined. Thus, many auctioneers’ saleyards or cattle auctions, which have no franchise, are described as markets, though they are not markets in the proper sense of the word. Further, the word is used in an economic sense, as in such phrases as “the need to find new markets,” “developing the overseas market,” &c. Cournot‡ says: “Economists understand by the term *market*, not any particular market place in which things are bought and sold, but the whole of any region in which buyers and sellers are in such free intercourse with one another that the prices of the same goods tend to equality easily and quickly.”

(b) **Intention of a Market.**—It is probable that, in the first instance, markets grew up spontaneously at a port, at a cross-road, around a castle or a monastery and then, under the maxim which feudal law derived from the Romans (*ubi est multitudo, ibi debet esse rector*)§ the law put the market under feudal authority for reasons of police.

While the original intention of granting market rights [was thus to prevent tumults and breaches of the peace, the function of markets as a means of guarding against dishonest dealing must have become important at an early date. Thus, in Anglo-Saxon times, transactions in the market were usually made before the “reeve,” or some person appointed by him, or in the presence of two or three “credible witnesses.” Such a sale in “market overt,” as it was called, gave the buyer a title against all comers. In fact, the advantages of having a regular market were twofold.

* Although every care has been taken to ensure accuracy of fact as regards both history and law, this section of the report is not intended to be used as an historical or legal text.

† “Laws relating to Markets and Fairs.” Pease and Chitty.

‡ See Marshall, “Principles of Economics,” Book V, Chapter L.

§ This may be translated “Where there is a crowd, someone should be responsible for its control.”

“Not only is there more variety to be got there, but more security. If Higg, the son of Snell, bought an ox by private treaty, and the ox turned out to have been stolen, Higg would be responsible to the original owner, and might be hanged for having the ox in his possession. But if he bought it in ‘market overt’ before the proper witnesses, he would be safe. Hence the grant of market privileges by the Crown made a place the buying and selling centre for the whole district, while the right of holding a fair would attract buyers and sellers from a much wider area.”* Besides furnishing the necessary medium whereby a buyer could obtain a good title to his purchases, through the publicity attaching to transactions, the market played an important part in the social life of the people, enabling them to exchange items of news and experience and to compare prices. Markets have, accordingly, assumed a real and direct influence on prices, which, in the neighbourhood of a market, should tend to be steady.

(c) **Origin of Markets.**—The gathering together of people at a convenient centre, at certain times of the year, or on certain days of the week, for the interchange of food and other necessaries of life is one of the oldest practices of civilisation.

In this country, contemporary with the evolution of a central system of Government, market trading grew to such importance that the Crown assumed the right to say whether or not fairs and markets were to be held. This prerogative of the Sovereign is said to be of Frankish origin. The franchise of holding markets and fairs was usually conferred by Royal Charter. Markets were also created by mesne lords, at any rate up to the time of Edward I. It follows that some of the existing market rights go back to a very early date. It is known that markets have been in existence within the confines of the City of London for more than 1,000 years; Billingsgate was used for the sale of fish 1,000 years ago, and Smithfield Market already existed in 1253.

The franchise of holding markets or fairs was granted, in some cases, to lords of the manor, in others to ecclesiastical bodies or ancient municipal corporations. From early times there have thus been both private and public markets.

In granting a Charter, regard was had to those factors which would contribute to the success of the market from a revenue standpoint, especially to the existence of a likely site which had already been used as a buying and selling centre within easy access of ports, roads, bridgeheads and other points where traders congregate. It was not the usual custom to specify the commodities to be sold, but, with the increase of trade, there arose a tendency to sell various commodities in separate market places, as the names of the streets in many old towns testify—Sheep Street, Milk Street, Cornhill, Poultry, Beastmarket, Butter Cross, Haymarket, &c. In consideration of the provision of land for the purpose of the market or of the expenses of its upkeep, the

* “History of Municipal Government in Liverpool.” Professor Ramsay Muir.

Crown frequently granted to owners of markets and fairs the right to levy tolls on goods sold in the market. Some markets have remained toll-free.

(d) **Origin of Fairs.**—The difference between a market and a fair is suggested by the words themselves—a fair conveys the idea of holiday. “Every fair is a market, but every market is not a fair.”* The chief difference lies, however, in the fact that fairs were as a rule bigger and were not held so frequently as markets which dealt largely with perishable foodstuffs. They were generally held on a fixed day or days in the year—in most cases a saint’s day—and very often in a churchyard or outside a monastery or convent. By Statute 13, Edward I, fairs and markets were forbidden to be held in churchyards, and by 27 Henry VI, Ch. V, due observance of Sunday and the abolition of fairs and markets on Sunday and high feast days were enacted. Probably the oldest fair in England is the Lee (Yorkshire) Horse Fair, which has been held for nearly 800 years without intermission.

Fairs play a relatively small part in present-day marketing in England and have survived chiefly as pleasure fairs; as business centres, they have been replaced by the more modern form of “annual sales.” A detailed description of an old English fair—that at Stourbridge (near Cambridge)—is given in Defoe’s “Tour through Britain.” An illustration of the Boston May Sheep Fair about 1830 is shown in Fig. 2.

The number of fairs held in England has gradually decreased with the rise of the properly constituted market. There are at present about 1,548 fairs held in 549 centres in England and Wales for the sale of livestock and agricultural produce. Although local commodity fairs are dying out, the great commodity fairs which flourished in the 15th century in France (Lyons), at Geneva, and, later, in Germany (Frankfort and Leipzig), and in the 19th century in Russia (Nijni Novgorod), developed from fairs dealing with special commodities produced in the region to sample fairs, such as those at Lyons and Leipzig. The annual motor shows of the present day may be regarded as in the same class; national fairs or trade exhibitions in this country are now tending to increase.

(ii) Acquisition of Market Rights.

From 1199 to 1483, over 2,800 grants of markets were made by the Crown and more than half of these were made in the first 74 years of that period. In the period from 1700 to 1846, the number of grants was 93.† Such grants may be, and sometimes are still made, but in recent times the right to hold a market has usually been derived from an Act of Parliament. Acts of Parliament relating to particular markets and fairs already in existence have also frequently been passed on the initiative of

* Elton and Costelloe: “Final Report of Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls.”

† “An Agricultural Faggot.” Sir Henry Rew.

market authorities in order more clearly to define their powers, or, in some cases, to enable them to vary their powers—especially when a charter defined the location of a market and it was desired to remove the market to some other place.

The Local Government Act, 1858, may be said to have inaugurated a new era in the history of this subject, since it conferred additional powers on local authorities to establish markets. These powers were extended by the Public Health Act, 1875, to urban district councils, and by the Public Health Act, 1908, to rural district councils, subject to the consent of the Minister of Health, who almost invariably directs that a local enquiry shall be held.

So it comes about that, from a strictly legal standpoint, markets can be classified as (1) common-law markets and (2) statutory markets. The former includes (a) charter markets, *i.e.*, markets of which the rights have been granted to any person or body corporate by Royal Charter or Letters Patent still in existence, and (b) markets by prescription, *i.e.*, markets of which the possessor can show no ancient grant but can prove that the right has been enjoyed from time immemorial, in which case the Courts presume a lost Charter. Statutory markets include (a) those markets created by special local Acts, and (b) those set up under Public General Acts.

Many of the common law rights to hold markets and levy tolls, originally granted to the lord of the manor, or other persons, have, during recent years, been acquired by local authorities, by purchase, or by lease, sometimes at considerable expense, sometimes at a "peppercorn" rent, or as a gift for the benefit of the town. Further, a charter or local Act market owned by a local authority can, by resolution of the local authority, be converted into a statutory market, but there is no means of converting a privately-owned charter market into a Public General Act market unless it is first acquired by a local authority.

There is also a third class of so-called markets, namely, those which have been established neither by royal prerogative nor by the authority of an Act of Parliament. These are often spoken of as markets, and have been so referred to even in cases in the Courts, but it is important to remember that they do not enjoy legal protection, and must be distinguished from markets with a regular origin and formal legal existence. The majority of the privately-owned auction marts are in this class.

New markets may be and have frequently been authorised by special Acts of Parliament within the common law distance of existing markets. With this important exception, a legal market is rigidly protected from an infringement of its franchise by the setting up of a new market within seven leucae, which is approximately equivalent to $6\frac{2}{3}$ miles. As against this, a new market may be set up alongside an existing market which is not legally constituted.

If a franchise is usurped by the setting up of a rival market within the common-law area of a legal market, the owner of

the franchise can apply for an injunction which would be granted without proof of actual damage if the rival market is held on the same day as the legal market, but if it is held on a different day actual damage must be proved. It is not necessary to show that the defendant has set up what purports to be a legal market ; it is enough that he has erected stalls and taken stallage. Other acts which count as a disturbance of the franchise are taking advantage of a market by selling just outside it to avoid paying the toll, selling by sample to avoid paying toll on the bulk,* or wrongfully preventing produce or cattle from coming to a market. The question of sales elsewhere than in markets, where the market has been established by special Acts subsequent to 1847, or under the Public Health Act, 1875, is provided for mainly by Section 13 of the Markets and Fairs Clauses Act, 1847, although other provisions may be found in special Acts.

A franchise may be lost by (a) forfeiture, (e.g., through acts done or tolls levied, &c., not being in accordance with the conditions of the franchise), (b) surrender, or (c) extinction by Act of Parliament. Under the Fairs Act, 1871, as amended by the Local Government Act, 1894, the Home Secretary has power to abolish fairs with the consent in writing of the owner, upon representations being made by the district council of the district in which the fair is held, or by the owner.

(iii) Regulation of Markets.

Under ancient grants, the owner of the market was held responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the market, and severe penalties were enacted for bad behaviour or dishonest dealing. Further, in early times, a court of "pie poudre" was held in every fair and market ; the right to hold this court was incident to every grant by the Crown and it might even exist by grant or prescription where there was no legal fair or market. It was held before the steward appointed by the lord, or before the mayor or his deputy and two citizens. As a rule, the court had jurisdiction only in matters arising within, and during the time of, the fair or market, such as contracts, trespasses and batteries. Although now obsolete, the court played an important part in the maintenance of law and order, and in the fulfilling of contracts made in the markets. This rather arbitrary court of civil jurisdiction forms an interesting contrast to the mass of laws and statutes which govern the markets of the present day, a subject on which relatively little has been written and about which little is known even by those who most frequent the markets.

A chronological list of Acts (since 1795) relating to markets and fairs is given in Appendix I, page 72. Of basic importance

* It should be noted that the Minister of Health now takes the view that a toll on samples can be imposed under the powers conferred by Section 166 of the Public Health Act, 1875 (i.e., with respect to a statutory market to which that Act applies).

is the Markets and Fairs Clauses Act, 1847, which consolidates in one Act certain provisions usually contained in Acts for constructing or regulating markets and fairs. This Act does not affect all markets and fairs authorised by special statute which declares that the Act shall be incorporated therewith. Since 1847, the conditions of marketing have changed materially, but no further general enactment regulating markets has been passed. Further, in some cases, the powers of local authorities are more comprehensive than those exercised in other cases under the Markets and Fairs Clauses Act, 1847, and the anomaly now exists that there is no standard Act operating throughout the country in respect of the conduct and control of markets.

The position regarding byelaws, tolls, and market-days may be briefly noted. The following authorities may make and, from time to time, repeal or alter byelaws for markets, which, when made under the ordinary law must, to be enforceable, be approved by the Minister of Health :—

(1) Town councils, urban district and rural district councils with respect to markets belonging to them.

(2) The Common Council of the City of London and town councils, with respect to markets provided or carried on by them under Section 32 of the Diseases of Animals Act 1894 ; these byelaws require to be approved by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.*

(3) Persons authorised to construct or regulate markets by special Acts incorporating the Markets and Fairs Clauses Act, 1847, Section 42.

Model byelaws for the regulation of publicly-owned markets other than those referred to in (2) above, are issued by the Minister of Health. These are constantly revised and kept up to date. The latest edition was issued in 1925. They provide, *inter alia* for :—

(a) regulating the use of the market place and the buildings, stalls, pens and standings therein, and for preventing nuisances or obstructions therein or in the immediate approaches thereto ;

(b) fixing the days and hours during each day on which the market shall be held.

Owners of statutory markets and fairs usually possess powers under their Acts, to make byelaws, but the private owner of a common-law market or fair has, as such, no power to make byelaws, and his regulations with regard to the use of the market or fair cannot be enforced either by fine or imprisonment.†

All tolls leviable by a local authority under the Public Health Act, 1875, are required to be approved by the Minister of Health

* County Councils are also provided for in this connection, but, at present, no markets are controlled by County Councils.

† "The Law Relating to Markets and Fairs." Pease and Chitty.

Where tolls are authorised by special Act, their amount is usually fixed by the Act itself, though occasionally there is power to vary them with or without the consent of the Minister of Health. In other cases, an amending Act or Provisional Order of the Minister of Health, subject to Parliamentary sanction, is required. Certain Acts of Parliament provide for the charging of such rents as the authority may consider reasonable, but, as a general rule, rents and stallages are matters of contract between the market authority and the persons who desire stalls. In common-law markets, toll is not payable in respect of sales unless the owner be entitled thereto by grant or prescription or by statute; for taking stallage, piccage* or pennage, no grant or prescription need be shown.

Under a Statute of Henry VI, to which reference has been made, it is illegal to show goods for sale in a market on Sundays, Good Fridays and certain other holy days. With these exceptions, a market can be held on any one or more days in the week according to the days prescribed by the local authority in pursuance of Section 14 of the Markets and Fairs Clauses Act, 1847, or as appointed by any byelaw which may be made by the authority. If a rival market is held on days other than those authorised, it is necessary, to prove damage, to obtain an injunction against the disturbance (*see* page 9). This also applies, in general, to charter markets, though Charters sometimes define the power of the market authority to regulate or prohibit standings in the market on days other than market days. Where a Charter alone, or an Act of Parliament alone, governs the market and fixes the days, the authority cannot alter them—unless the proper steps are taken to make available the machinery provided for that purpose in the Markets and Fairs Clauses Act. This is one of the advantages of converting a publicly-owned market held under Charter or special Act into a Public Health Act market. It should be noted that, at present, the market authorities of privately-owned charter markets, and of privately-owned markets under local Acts, have no means of varying their market days, apart, of course, from getting a new Charter or a new Act.

Among Acts or regulations of general application which react on the conduct of markets and on market transactions may be mentioned the Weights and Measures Act, 1878, under which owners or managers of public markets "shall provide proper scales and balances, and weights and measures or other machines for the purpose of weighing or measuring all goods sold, offered or exposed for sale in any such markets"; the accuracy of such weights and measures was required to be tested at least twice in every year. Under the Corn Returns Act, 1882, all buyers of British corn in certain scheduled markets must make returns of all purchases, stating the quantity and the price. From these returns, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries calculates average prices for publication in the "London Gazette."

* Piccage is "a duty for picking holes in the lord's ground for the posts of the stalls" (Comyns Digest IV, 185).

The Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act, 1887, requires market owners to provide suitable and adequate accommodation for the weighing of cattle sold. The Diseases of Animals Act, 1894, empowers the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries from time to time to make, alter and revoke orders relating to the holding and conduct of markets and fairs, and matters connected therewith; animal landing wharves, stations, lairs and sheds and other places provided by local authorities were also made subject to its provisions.

During the War, markets were subjected to numerous Orders issued under the Defence of the Realm Act, but, with the cessation of hostilities, these were gradually withdrawn and so left no permanent impression on the laws governing markets and fairs.

Among Acts or regulations passed or issued since the War are the Corn Sales Act of 1921, under which the hundredweight became the standard weight of measure for corn, the Public Health Meat Regulations, 1925, in regard to cleanliness in handling meat, the Horticultural Produce (Sales on Commission) Act, 1926, which requires salesmen of fruit and vegetables consigned for sale on commission to detail the charges made for services other than selling, and the Sale of Food (Weights and Measures) Act, 1926, which relates mainly to the retail trade. Of particular reference to auction markets is the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act, 1926, in regard to the compulsory weighing of fat stock in auction marts before sale.

It will be seen that both the Minister of Health and the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries are concerned in the administration of various statutes affecting markets.

The jurisdiction of the Minister of Health extends to sanctioning loans to local authorities, confirming byelaws, approving tolls, granting the powers of an urban authority to rural district councils, approving sale, appropriation and lease of land acquired or used for market purposes, reporting on proposed local legislation, making Provisional Orders amending existing Acts, and advising local authorities on questions of market law and practice.

The powers of the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries are not concerned with the establishment of markets, but with the administration of certain Acts of Parliament that, *inter alia*, affect markets. These include the Merchandise Marks Act, the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, the Weighing of Cattle Acts, the Corn Returns Act, and the Diseases of Animals Acts. The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries also has jurisdiction over animal landing wharves and undertakes the collection and publication of market prices.

The Home Secretary is directly concerned with fairs and, under the Fairs Act, 1873, has powers to vary the days on which fairs are held, or, as stated above, to abolish fairs altogether. The Home Secretary is also responsible for the administration

of the Shops Act, the provisions of which are applicable to stalls in markets ; the Board of Trade is responsible for the administration of the Weights and Measures Acts ; these powers, however apply to trading in general and not to markets in particular,

(iv) Administration of Markets.

It should be noted that the only matters in which external authority has any voice, as regards markets, are those specified in the preceding section ; the more important are that the consent of the Minister of Health is required for loans, byelaws and tolls, and that cattle markets must be paved and cleansed as the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries directs. In general, the principle adopted is that the functions of local authorities in relation to markets should rest on a similar footing to that of certain of their other activities in the sphere of municipal government, *i.e.*, they should be free to manage their own affairs, subject to their fulfilling a minimum standard in each branch of their administration.

For the administration and management of publicly-owned markets, a special Markets Committee of the local authority is, as a rule, responsible ; this Committee is advised to a varying extent by the market superintendent, an official who is directly responsible to the Markets Committee for all that takes place on the markets. The market superintendent, from the nature of his work, must necessarily be in close touch with both buyers and sellers, and also with present-day problems of marketing and market management.

Users of the markets are not always directly represented on Markets Committees. This probably accounts for a suggestion made in relation to Smithfield Market, London, by the Departmental Committee on the Wholesale Food Markets of London,* that a market advisory committee should be formed to assist the Markets Committee ; such an advisory committee, it was suggested, should be under the chairmanship of the market superintendent and should consist of representatives of the various classes of traders using the market, including retailers, to whom should be added representatives of the railways, public carriers, porters, &c. This suggestion has never been acted on. At first sight, it does, of course, appear anomalous that the Committee responsible for the markets should not comprise representatives of the users, though market superintendents naturally keep in touch with all sections of the trade. The present system is, however, so much an integral part of the machinery of local government that the direct representations of users would be an innovation which would certainly be opposed. As an instance, a special committee of the Manchester Corporation has considered this question and has recommended that no market tenant, or councillor representing the ward in which the

* Cmd. 1341. 1921.

market is situated, should serve on the Markets Committee; this recommendation was adopted by the City Council.

In private markets, or in markets not legally constituted, control is entirely in the hands of the market owner or auctioneer as the case may be, and with the exception of co-operative auctions, which are few in number, the users of such markets have no representation on the management. Regulations in regard to sanitation, nuisance and, in the case of cattle markets, in regard to paving, disinfecting and the provision of weighbridges, &c., have to be adhered to as in the case of publicly-controlled markets.

CHAPTER II : MARKET CHARGES AND FINANCE.

(i) Charges.

(a) **Rents.**—Charges for stall-space are the chief source of income of the market owner, and these charges, especially in the wholesale fruit and vegetable markets and retail markets, are gradually taking the place of tolls, except as regards locally-grown produce. They are easier and, therefore, less expensive to collect than tolls ; they ensure a more settled position for tenants, and they enable a distinction to be made between stalls according to their situation in the market.

The rentals charged at markets vary considerably with such factors as the accommodation provided, the length of tenancy and the importance of the market. The average rents charged in wholesale fruit and vegetable markets may be judged from the following examples :—

	<i>Per sq. yd. per week.</i>
Leicester - - - - -	9d.
Birmingham - - - - -	1s. 2d. to 2s.
Newcastle - - - - -	9d. to 1s. 6d.
Manchester - - - - -	1s. 3d. to 1s. 9d.
Liverpool - - - - -	2s. to 3s.

Although tolls in municipal markets are usually subject to ratification by the Minister of Health, rents, except where there is a local Act requirement to the contrary, are not subject to such approval, although, in many cases, they have replaced tolls previously charged. This is explained by the fact that whereas rents are essentially matters of contract, for nobody is obliged to take the space for which a rent is charged, tolls fall to be paid by every person who brings into the market goods of the class to which the toll applies, and as the franchise of market imports a correlative right in every one of the King's subjects to bring marketable commodities there, the theory of the law is that the fixing of the scale of tolls should not be left without control by some authority on behalf of the Crown.

The rents chargeable in markets held under local Acts are, in some cases, limited by those Acts. The limits imposed are sometimes much in excess of what can, in fact, be charged. A striking case is that of Bury, where the authorities have power to charge for any goods up to 6d. per day or part of a day per square foot. In some cases, however, the schedules are definitely restrictive. There is no uniformity in the limits fixed by these schedules in various market Acts ; anomalies, where they exist, can only be removed by fresh legislation.

In some markets, there is a waiting list of applicants for stalls ; when a vacancy arises, the list is considered and the future tenant selected therefrom. In other cases, when a stall becomes vacant, the authorities advertise for tenders for the future

occupancy leaving it to the applicant to quote the rental he is prepared to pay. Another method is for the market authority itself to fix the rent and to advertise the stall at that figure.

In markets where rents established by custom are charged and these are less than those which would be secured by open tender, the local authority virtually subsidises its tenants. If, in such cases, the market tenants are in competition with outside traders, there would seem to be a case for deciding rentals by tender or by other competitive method. Where the stalls are let by tender, the charge should, if possible, be proportionate to the area occupied, having due regard to the situation of the stall and its equipment.

The tender system protects the local authority from any suggestion of favouritism as between one applicant and another in the matter of rent, although, where the system has been in operation for a considerable period, it may, no doubt, happen that standings of similar value are held at different rentals, due possibly to differences in tenancy periods and in the conditions prevailing when past vacancies have been filled. Further, market authorities claim that the tender system enables them to obtain an economic rent for the standings; this would certainly be the case if they accepted the highest tender, but it is known that this is not always possible, as, for instance, when an applicant tenders a higher sum than that which a special Act allows the market authority to take, or when, in the opinion of the market authority, the person who makes the highest offer is not a desirable tenant.

Where the rentals are fixed by the market authority prior to advertising the ground to let, it is claimed that the authority, as a business body, is as competent to gauge the value of a stall as the trader, and that, in advertising for tenants at a stipulated rental, it is not handicapped in the selection of a tenant by any complication in regard to the rent. This practice enables an authority to differentiate between the rents of the stalls in good positions and those less favourably situated; but, in general, it is probably the case that, in markets where this practice obtains, variations are not so great as in markets where the tender system is in operation.

Closely connected with the letting of space in markets are the questions of security of tenure and of goodwill. In markets where a continuous daily business is transacted, weekly rentals are usual. Weekly rentals offer the following advantages over arrangements made from day to day :—

(a) they provide a regular revenue which can be easily collected ;

(b) they afford a measure of permanence to stallholding while, at the same time, leaving a market authority theoretically free to revise its tenant roll at weekly intervals ; this may be said to give some assurance that business

will be conducted in a proper manner, which is of great importance to senders and sustains the reputation of the market as a business centre.

Many merchants in wholesale fruit and vegetable markets, particularly those who have a large capital invested in their businesses, regard the weekly tenancy as an irksome and petty restriction wholly unsuited to modern trading conditions, and consider that the time has arrived for market authorities, in the interests of their markets, to overhaul their procedure in this important respect. The attitude of the trade can be understood, even though it rarely happens that a reliable trader in a municipal undertaking is unnecessarily disturbed in the tenancy of his stall. This leads to another point. In the more important markets, there are many traders who have continued in occupation of stands for over half a century without any more security than the payment of a weekly rent. Many of these are commission salesmen. By their enterprise and business acumen they have built up a flourishing business, which they are naturally reluctant to surrender when they are no longer able to continue their personal supervision. A number of authorities in such cases (or on the death of a tenant) give sympathetic consideration to the claims of the next of kin ; but there are other cases in which the tenant feels that he should be permitted to dispose of his market business and that the market authority should accept as tenant a person nominated by him. Where a vacating tenant has occupied his stand for a specified number of years, some market authorities do, in fact, permit him to nominate a successor, subject to their approval. From the trader's standpoint, there is much to be said in favour of this recognition of goodwill, but, in the absence of any special safeguard, its development throughout the market would, in effect, take out of the hands of the market authority the power of selecting its own tenants.

Closely connected with this is the question of admitting limited liability companies as tenants of a stall. At least one important authority has an arrangement under which partnerships, limited companies, &c., are not recognised as tenants, but the stall is held either by an individual, or jointly by two or three persons. In this way, when the tenant or one of the joint tenants severs his connection with the occupancy of the stall, the future tenancy is subject to the consideration of the Market authority.

In wholesale fruit and vegetable markets, produce grown within carting distance of the market is usually sold from the carts or wagons in which it arrives—a practice that has increased with the development of motor transport. Carts or wagons are then usually regarded as occupying a certain space "per day" and a charge in the nature of a daily rent (though it may sometimes be inaccurately called a toll) is made accordingly. As a rule, this varies from 4*d.* to 1*s.* for carts and from 6*d.* to 2*s.* for wagons and is, in some cases, irrespective of the volume and

nature of the produce carried. At some of the larger markets, the charges are higher ; thus, at Birmingham, the charges are :—

Covered Market.

Carts :—

1/-	2 wheels.
1/-	Cart load of hay.
1/6	Containing loose vegetables* (loaded in body).
2/-	" " " " (loaded on wings).
2/6	" " " " (gearing above body).

Wagons ;—

2/-	More than 2 wheels.
1/6	Wagon load of hay.
2/-	Horse drawn (vegetables)* wagon (loaded in body).
2/6	" " " " (loaded on wings).
3/- to 3/6	" " " " railway wagon (gearing above body).
3/- to 7/6	Mechanically-propelled vehicle containing loose vegetables.*

Uncovered Market.

Carts :—

6d.	2 wheels.
6d.	Fruit or vegetables (loaded in body).
9d.	" " " " (loaded on wings).
1/-	" " " " (gearing above body).

Wagons :—

1/-	More than 2 wheels.
1/-	Fruit and vegetables (loaded in body).
1/6	" " " " (loaded on wings).
2/-	" " " " railway wagon (gearing above body).

In publicly-controlled cattle markets, where sales are by auction, the auctioneer usually pays the market authority for his right to use a certain sale ring, or for his exclusive use of the sale ring on a certain day. In some cattle markets, parts are let on a yearly rental to dealers ; the rental per pen is in the neighbourhood of £2 per annum and entitles the dealer to have first claim on a particular pen each market day.

In public abattoirs and meat markets, the charges vary according to the facilities given. Charges in public slaughterhouses constructed under the Public Health Act, 1875, require the approval of the Minister of Health. Charges for the use of slaughterhouses, meat markets or chill rooms may be imposed at a rate per animal, though, in general, it is more convenient in the case of regular users to make inclusive charges for accommodation according to the area occupied. This is of particular importance in abattoirs in order to ensure that there is no undue retention of space by butchers in excess of the amount of slaughter carried on.

* Or fruit and vegetables mixed.

Stallage.—Stallage is “ a duty levied by an owner of a market for the liberty of having stalls in a fair or market or for removing them from one place to another.”* At the present time, it represents a small rent charge paid by the casual users of a market for the privilege of hiring a stall for a limited period of time ; it is usually collected daily. The average charge for stall accommodation in an open retail market is 3*d.* per square yard per day. In a number of retail markets, a distinction favourable to ratepayers or residents is made in the rents charged.

(*b*) *Tolls.*—From evidence given before the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls towards the end of last century, it would seem that the legality of some of the tolls charged had long been regarded as dubious or their incidence held to be irregular and bearing little or no relation to the value of the goods offered or to the accommodation given in return for the charges levied. Examples of tolls in kind were also brought to the notice of the Commissioners. Happily, many of the abuses connected with the charging and collecting of market tolls have now been rectified ; it is believed that all tolls in kind and a number of arbitrary and uncertain charges have disappeared.

As far as possible, particulars of the tolls now charged in each market of England and Wales have recently been collected and tabulated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and are available for general reference. It is, however, exceedingly difficult to draw comparisons between the tolls charged at different markets. It must be borne in mind that tolls are not the only source of income available to market owners ; rents are charged in many markets in addition to tolls and, in such cases, the tolls are not comparable with those charged in a market where they are the only charges levied.

In legally-constituted livestock markets, a toll is charged on each beast entering the market whether it be sold by auction, by private treaty or not sold at all. Tolls are, in fact, the most convenient form in which the market charges can be levied in livestock markets, although experience shows that, in order to avoid disputes, they should be assessed as soon as the animals enter the market and collected immediately. A number of private-treaty markets have, however, given way, either wholly or in part, to the more modern auction marts which are in the ownership or control of auctioneers or market companies and at which no market charges, as such, are levied. In other cases, especially where there is no accommodation for private treaty business, the auctioneer compounds and pays a lump sum annually to the market owners in lieu of tolls ; the market then becomes, in effect, toll-free.

Tolls on livestock have, of course, no appreciable effect on the cost of butcher's meat, but, where charged, the range is consider-

* Comyns Digest IV, 185.

able, and this is not wholly explained by the fact that the smaller markets usually find it necessary to charge higher tolls than those in which a large volume of business is transacted. The per head tolls on bulls vary from 3*d.* to 1*s.* 4*d.*, on cows, heifers and steers from $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.** to 1*s.*, and on calves from 1*d.* to 4*d.* Tolls on pigs vary from $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* for sucking pigs to 3*d.* or 4*d.* for fat hogs. Sometimes, but not often, the charges are levied on a weight basis. The greatest variation in tolls is found in the case of stallions; these vary as a rule from 1*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.*, but, in one, case at least, the toll charged is 5*s.* The tolls on other horses vary from 6*d.* to 2*s.* The tolls on sheep vary from 4*d.* to 3*s.* per score. At many markets, there are "reductions for quantity" for sheep, thus:—

on 10 or less	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9 <i>d.</i>
on 10 to 20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/6.
on 20 to 30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2/3.
or 2 to 5 in a pen	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 <i>d.</i>
over 5 in a pen	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6 <i>d.</i>

It is interesting to note that, in some cases,—at Nottingham, under a local Act, and at Louth, for example—a different and higher toll is charged on beasts sold by auction than on those sold by private treaty. An extra toll on goods sold by auction is, however, generally regarded as objectionable so far as the general law is concerned.

Tolls on such commodities as eggs, butter, cheese and poultry (both live and dead) vary in their method of assessment, but are usually levied at so much per hamper, basket or crate as the case may be, the amount of toll being in proportion to the size of the receptacle; thus at Crewe, the toll payable on egg-baskets or egg-boxes measuring 17 in. \times 14 in. is 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*, on containers measuring 2 ft. 6 in. \times 2 ft. is 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* and so on up the scale until the toll on a box measuring 4 ft. \times 6 ft. is 6*d.* irrespective of the number of eggs offered for sale in the boxes; these are representative tolls.

In most wholesale fruit and vegetable markets, provision is made for the levying of tolls on a package basis. These tolls are only charged on packages of locally-grown produce brought in and disposed of by the growers themselves; they may be regarded as a charge for space occupied and, therefore, as corresponding to the charges levied on carts and wagons from which produce is sold (*see* page 17). Covent Garden Market and the Borough Market in London are exceptional in that the package toll system is, as far as possible, applied to all produce received for disposal. In other London markets and in all provincial wholesale markets, produce received by distributors who are stallholders is not subject to toll, but carries, of course, the overhead charge by way of rent levied by the market authority on the space occupied by its tenants.

* This is exceptionally low.

(c) Other Charges.—

Parking, &c.—A number of owners of retail markets have considerably augmented their income by allowing cars to be parked in the market place on non-market days at a charge of 6*d.* or 1*s.*, but there are, of course, legal complications where a market is in the highway, as in the old-fashioned market-squares of country towns. In one instance the income derived from parking charges is said to exceed £500 per annum. Similarly, at many wholesale markets, a charge is levied on all buyers and sellers who wish to park their cars and carts in the market on market days. In some cases floats or carts plying for hire in the market also pay a charge, usually 1*s.*, although in Leeds carts plying for hire only pay 2*d.* At the fruit and vegetable market at Brentford an entry charge is levied on all vehicles.¶

Weighing.—At some markets a separate charge is made for the use of the weighbridge in order to cover its cost and the wages of the attendant. The charges for the use of a weighbridge vary, in the case of livestock, from 1*d.* to 6*d.*, and, in the case of fruit and vegetables, from ½*d.* for 28 lb. up to 1*s.* for 5-ton to 10-ton loads. At present, traders in wholesale fruit and vegetable markets make but little use of the weighbridges when the market charges are on the load and not by weight, although outside traders often employ the machines considerably. Under the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act, 1926, charges for weighing as prescribed by the principal Act of 1887 are altered and a sum not exceeding 6*d.* per head of cattle and 3*d.* for every lot of 5 or less sheep or pigs is the limit now chargeable at auction sales.

Porterage.—Charges for porterage fall more especially on producers who consign produce such as fruit and vegetables to market. They have naturally increased somewhat since the War, notably at Covent Garden. They vary considerably with the distance over which the produce has to be carried; thus, at some markets, where the produce can be unloaded direct on to the stalls, the porterage charges are relatively low; at other markets where wagons are unable to draw in and unload, the charges are higher. A special porterage service provided by the market authority is only necessary in congested markets; in properly laid-out markets users can employ their own staff for this purpose, and prefer to do so.

(ii) Finance.

There is great divergence between towns of approximately equal population in the amount of profit earned by municipal markets. There are various reasons for this. Population figures are not, of course, a certain guide to the number of possible users of a market; the population of the surrounding district has also to be taken into account. Some market authorities have redeemed capital charges while others are still paying them;

some, again, are benefiting from past prudence in the acquisition of property for market extensions. It must also be remembered that markets are carried on under different Charters and Acts which limit the powers of market authorities in different ways.

Investigation shows that, while profits in the smaller markets are negligible, they tend to be considerable in the larger towns, particularly those with a population exceeding 80,000. It is the custom of some local authorities to put by a portion of the surplus accruing from their markets after all expenses and interest have been paid, in order to create a fund as a reserve for future expenditure on the markets themselves, or for the reduction of rents and tolls. Much of the market accommodation in this country is antiquated and inadequate, as is instanced by the growth of wholesale establishments on the fringe of many markets, and it is obviously a sound and far-seeing policy to build up a fund which can be used to provide more accommodation and greater spaciousness. The principle of applying such a fund to the reduction of tolls reflects the point of view of the producer who naturally wants low marketing costs and contends that he should not be required to contribute to the relief of the rates. This point of view was upheld by the Linlithgow Committee. In general, also, the principle has guided the Minister of Health in approving revised charges for tolls; as a rule, approval has only been given when it could be shown that the charges were reasonable.

Taking the country as a whole, the more usual procedure is, however, for any surpluses arising from markets, after payment of interest and sinking fund charges, to be diverted into the general accounts of the market authority. In some cases this is made obligatory by the Act under which the market is conducted, and it is not even possible for the authorities concerned to form a reserve fund out of profits for future market improvements. In a borough there is an express statutory direction in Section 139 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, that the profits therein specified (which would include the profits of a market belonging to a municipal corporation as such) shall be paid into the borough fund. Decisions of the Courts show that the principles laid down in this Act will be applied under a local Act in the absence of any contrary provision in such Act. As regards markets held under the Public Health Acts, there is no exactly corresponding enactment, but there is no power under the Public Health Acts authorising a local authority to establish a separate fund for market purposes, and as all expenses are to be paid out of the general fund and the power of raising a rate is, with certain exceptions, only to be exercised to feed this fund, it is evident that any profits on a market undertaking established under the Act must be paid into it.

The principle that profits should go into the general accounts is supported by a number of local authorities. In some cases the amount which accrues from market undertakings is considerable. The local authorities hold that as they provide the

money in the first place, they are entitled to make their markets remunerative consistently with maintaining the efficiency desirable for the consumer and, further, that the probability that markets will contribute to lower rates serves to stimulate interest in their welfare and development.

It cannot be denied that there is an apparent conflict of interest between, on the one hand, local authorities, representing, in the main, the consumers, and, on the other hand, the producers who use the markets for the disposal of their wares. It is obviously impracticable for charges to be based on such an exact estimate of costs that no profits would be earned. Authorities must budget for a safe margin, which in favourable years will be exceeded. It is also reasonable that a fair share of the police, sewage and other services rendered to the markets should be set against their revenues. These are at present usually included in the general municipal accounts. Further, apart from tolls—and in many wholesale produce markets only a small proportion of the produce is subject to tollage—reduction of charges, such as rents, would be of no direct or appreciable benefit to either producer or consumer. Local authorities urge that in any case their charges are limited by economic considerations. No one can compel a trader to come into a market when he can sell, unaffected by market rights, in his own shop or warehouse. Bearing these considerations in mind, it may be asked whether the amount of rent charged to traders in a market is not less important to the producer than the provision of proper market facilities. It is in the larger towns that good wholesale markets are of the greatest importance to the producer, and a policy designed to that end would have great value.

At present, when a large town finds it necessary to make any considerable market improvement, it usually has to have recourse to a loan. In view of the numerous demands on the borrowing powers of local authorities, the necessity to borrow must often be inconvenient and, in consequence, market improvements must frequently be postponed or neglected. Delay of this kind may, in some cases, be a serious matter. The opportunity to purchase a site may not recur, and if the proper time for expansion of the market is missed, traders may go elsewhere for accommodation. It would, therefore, be to the ultimate advantage of producers and other users if a proportion of the profits earned on markets were allocated to reserve for extensions and improvements. As has been shown, many market authorities are prevented, by statute, from following this course; an amendment of the law would, therefore, be necessary before the creation of a reserve fund, out of profits, could be legalised.

CHAPTER III : DEVELOPMENT AND CLASSIFICATION OF MARKETS.

Originally all produce markets served for the direct exchange of commodities between producer and consumer, and were, in essence, retail markets. Illustrations of old markets are shown in Fig. 1 (*frontispiece*) and Fig. 3. With the development of commercial agriculture many farmers marketed a greater volume of produce than they could conveniently sell in small lots to consumers ; similarly, particularly in areas where production tended towards specialisation, a considerable quantity of produce was raised which was surplus to local demand and had to be marketed further afield. The first gave rise to the local trader who specialised in retail distribution ; the second to the country dealer who specialised in the collection and assembling of produce for dispatch in bulk to distant consuming centres. In some instances country markets have reacted to these developments by changing gradually from retail to mainly or wholly wholesale trade. In other cases local markets have declined relatively in importance ; their predominantly retail character has remained, but production surplus to local requirements has come to be handled mostly by dealers, without recourse to market facilities.

In the main consuming centres the original retail markets have largely persisted and, in many cases, still make provision for the sale of locally-grown produce by producers ; but local produce is invariably supplemented by supplies from all parts. Here, again, there has been specialisation, and not only do retail distributors, as such, now predominate in most retail markets, but shops and stores throughout urban areas now account for by far the greater part of the retail trade. Increasing urbanisation, and, with it, the growing difficulty of bringing food to and distributing it in thickly-populated areas, has also given rise to the specialist activities associated with wholesale distribution, and in the more important towns and cities there are now central markets devoted to wholesale trade ; they afford facilities for concentrating produce from wide areas, including overseas sources of supply, and for its subsequent dispersion in bulk among wholesale and retail distributors. The normal line of market development has been for both wholesale and retail business to be conducted side by side in the same market until it was found more advantageous to separate the trades.

Two further points may be made in connection with markets in large consuming centres. The first is that in most wholesale markets a space is reserved for local growers who can bring in sufficient quantities of produce to sell wholesale. The second is



FIG. 2.—Boston May Sheep Fair about 1830. 24,000 sheep shown.

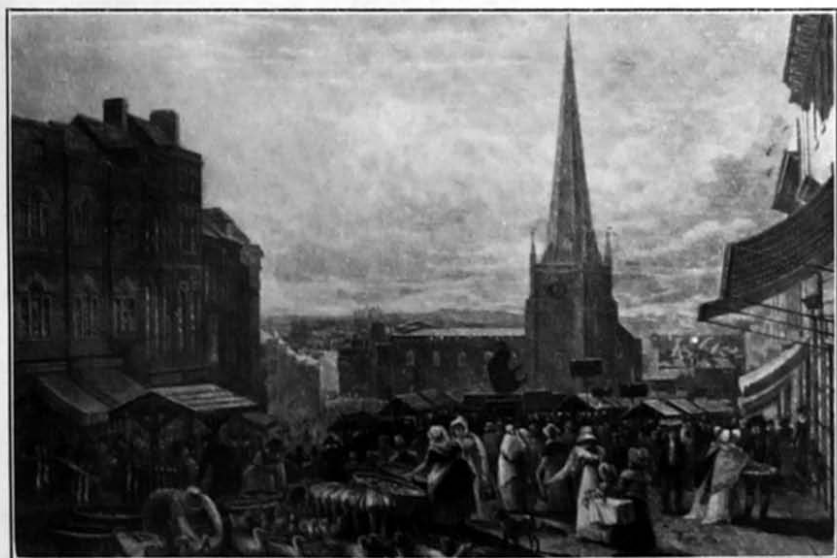


FIG. 3.—High Street Market, Birmingham, in 1827.

Facing page 25.]



FIG. 4.—Retail Market, Derby.



FIG. 5.—Market Hall, Birkenhead.

that the retail markets in many of the large cities have been developed and extended in such a way that they bear little resemblance to the small retail markets or street markets from which they arose (*see* Figs. 4 and 5). Covered accommodation has been erected in many cases and often both an open-air retail market and a covered retail market are to be found in the same town.

So far as can be ascertained, there are 1,345 separate markets in England and Wales at which agricultural supplies are disposed of.* From information furnished by local authorities and other market owners, it appears that, of these, 269 markets are solely devoted to retail trade, 754 to wholesale trade only, and 322 to both classes of business in varying proportions. An analysis of these markets on the basis of market rights, if any, and according to whether they are public or private markets, gives the following results :—

—	Charter.	Public Health Act.	Local or Special Act.	Other so-called Markets.	Total.
Public Markets.					
Retail only - -	85	67	33	—	185
Wholesale only - -	31	10	17	—	58
Retail and Wholesale	105	50	88	—	243
Total Public Markets	221	127	138	—	486
Private Markets.					
Retail only - -	26	—	6	52	84
Wholesale only - -	74	—	20	602	696
Retail and Wholesale	22	—	8	49	79
Total Private Markets	122	—	34	703	859
Total Public and Private Markets	343	127	172	703	1,345

The following Table gives a reclassification according to commodities and method of sale. It should be borne in mind that frequently in one and the same market more than one commodity or commodity group is handled and sales may be by both private treaty and auction. Further, at many of the markets where both retail and wholesale business is carried on, the quantity of produce disposed of by retail, in some cases, and wholesale, in others, may, at times, be negligible.

* In addition, there are 1,548 agricultural fairs held in 549 centres (*see* page 7).

Commodity.	Public.				Private.			
	Auction only.	Private Treaty only.	Auction and Private Treaty.	Total.	Auction only.	Private Treaty only.	Auction and Private Treaty.	Total.

Retail only.

Butter and Cheese -	3	230	7	240	9	67	1	77
Eggs -	4	217	5	226	11	58	4	73
Fish -	—	287	5	292	1	74	1	76
Fruit and Vegetables	1	267	11	279	15	90	1	106
Meat -	—	315	6	321	3	88	1	92
Poultry -	6	172	11	189	18	48	4	70

Wholesale only.

Butter and Cheese -	10	11	1	22	93	11	4	108
Corn -	—	118	—	118	—	62	—	62*
Eggs -	15	15	2	32	101	6	2	109
Fish -	2	3	1	6	4	3	3	10
Fruit and Vegetables	7	5	—	12	93	10	4	107
Livestock -	98	28	98	224	698	9	30	737
Meat -	1	3	—	4	9	1	2	12
Poultry -	36	11	4	51	271	6	6	283
Wool (Annual Sales) -	38	21	1	60	24	13	1	38

Retail and Wholesale.

Butter and Cheese -	5	70	18	93	15	16	1	32
Eggs -	6	66	20	92	20	14	3	37
Fish -	1	29	4	34	2	1	—	3
Fruit and Vegetables	5	81	19	105	13	13	3	29
Meat -	1	22	2	25	1	3	—	4
Poultry -	12	55	58	125	25	11	4	40

Markets at which produce is sold solely or partly by retail are to be found in both town and country and are discussed in the next Chapter.

Although no hard-and-fast line can be drawn, wholesale markets may be broadly classified according to function into (1) markets in producing areas, which are usually assembling markets whence produce is dispatched to distant centres of

* In addition there are 160 street markets.

demand and (2) markets in thickly populated areas where produce is concentrated from home and abroad for distribution locally and to other markets.

Those wholesale markets that are situated in the producing areas are referred to briefly in Chapter V of this Report, but they are being fully described in the various Reports issued in the Economic Series dealing with the marketing of the commodities concerned, and will receive notice in subsequent numbers of this survey. Wholesale markets in the large consuming centres are also considered in Chapter V.

Livestock markets, from their dissimilarity to produce markets, are discussed separately (Chapters VI and VII), as also, for the sake of convenience, are abattoirs, cold stores and hide and skin markets (Chapter VIII). Prominence has been given to livestock markets, not only because they are numerically the most important, but because their turnover of home-produced supplies is, in the aggregate, enormous and more farmers are personally concerned with them in one way or another than with any other kind of wholesale market.

CHAPTER IV: RETAIL MARKETS.

Retail markets are mostly held on sites which have been so used for generations. They vary from small open-air "farmers' markets" held weekly or bi-weekly in market squares in country districts to the daily markets held in commodious halls in large cities which, from an architectural and business standpoint, are in keeping with the importance of the markets as agencies in the distribution of food. There are still, however, large towns where daily retail markets are held on open spaces and, although such markets may be both popular and picturesque, they do not meet the health and traffic requirements of the present day.

Both classes of retail markets—open and covered—are tending more and more to change from centres mainly for the sale of foodstuffs to mere arcades of stalls for the sale of haberdashery, crockery, books, clothing, ironmongery and toys. In some retail markets, by far the greater space is now devoted to non-agricultural commodities. The argument in favour of the admission into the market of a variety of trades is that the market is thus made attractive to all classes of the community and costs are spread. Hence, the market charges which fall on foodstuffs are lower than they might otherwise be. This latter point is important in a market where space is provided for local growers who, at certain periods of the year, have not sufficient produce to sell in the market for more than one or two days in the week. On the other hand, the increasing space given to traders of general merchandise who regularly occupy the market does, of course, decrease the space allocated to foodstuffs, and it would, therefore, seem to be of advantage, from the standpoint of agricultural marketing, if, in the allocation of stalls, a preference were shown to producers and sellers of agricultural produce.

In the large towns, the central sites on which the markets are held have become very valuable property (*see* Figs. 6 and 7). Hence, retail markets are frequently criticised on the ground that the market trader has an advantage over the retail shopkeeper owing to the market rents not being commensurate with the value of the market site. This raises the wider issue of the economic justification of public retail markets—an issue on which there are differences of opinion. It seems, however, to be generally agreed that most retail markets play an important part in price determination and that they offer both variety and cheapness; in so far as producers sell direct to consumers, such markets also offer produce at its freshest and afford a ready means of disposing of surplus produce which might otherwise fail to find a market. But if, as is often the case, the prices charged for perishable produce in retail markets are somewhat lower than those charged for similar produce in shops outside, it must be remembered that these latter commonly render additional services such as delivery and credit, which cost money and must be paid for.

In a number of wholesale markets stalls are to be found at which a purely retail trade is simultaneously carried on. It is held that to separate the two classes of business in such cases would not only be an unnecessary disturbance, but might be disadvan-



FIG. 6.—The Great Market Place, Nottingham.



FIG. 7.—The Morledge Market, Derby.

tageous to both, since each depends to some extent on the other. The general opinion appears, however, to be that it is better practice to segregate the two classes of trade, and, if separate markets or sections of the market are not available, to confine them to separate periods of the day.

A point of some interest is the possibility of opening retail markets in the outer zones of large towns to keep pace with the growth of population. Some market authorities have this under consideration. Derby, for instance, is extending largely in one direction and the Town Council has recently authorised the purchase of land in the new district for the purpose of a suburban market which, within the next five years, may be within convenient shopping range of as many as 10,000 people. Liverpool affords another example.

During recent years, a number of unauthorised retail markets have been set up in various localities; in some cases they are, no doubt, an infringement of existing market rights. The promoter of the market seems merely to have made arrangements with a landowner for the occupation of certain ground, and then advertised the holding of a market. Sometimes stalls with canvas roofs have been provided, fitted with trestle tables and let to stall-holders at agreed rents. The sites occupied by these so-called markets are often quite unsuitable for the purpose.

Street or kerb markets are found in large towns and cities. Though not strictly markets, they are retail markets in embryo. The existence of a flourishing street market is probably evidence that a municipal retail market would succeed in the neighbourhood. For traffic reasons, street markets are now in process of disappearing from main thoroughfares. They are, in fact, an illegitimate obstruction of the highway except in a few places where they have been legalised by local Acts.

There is also a move towards regulating hawkers and requiring them to take out a local licence in addition to the licence-fee payable to the State under the Hawkers Act, 1888. Some local authorities already have power under local Acts to license and regulate hawkers; others have no such powers.

The whole question of street trading in the London area has recently received much attention in consequence of traffic congestion. In 1926 the Bermondsey Borough Council (Street Trading) Act was passed, and the London County Council is promoting legislation in the session of Parliament of 1927 to enable metropolitan borough councils to deal with street trading on similar lines. The main features of the Bermondsey Act are that persons selling from a barrow in a stationary position at a place in a carriage-way or footpath of any street in the borough must take out an annual licence for which the fee is 5s. Persons trading with a barrow which they ordinarily move from place to place do not require a licence. The licence may prescribe the street or area and the position at which the licensee may trade, the articles and things in which he may trade, the day or days on which he may trade, and the number of barrows, &c., that he may use. Penalties are laid down for infringements of the Act.

CHAPTER V : WHOLESALE PRODUCE MARKETS.

(i) Markets in Producing Areas.

(a) **Fruit and Vegetables.**—With the exception of the fruit and vegetable auctions in the West Midlands, which number 17 in all, the wholesale fruit and vegetable markets in producing areas are not of great importance. There are, of course, many markets throughout the country to which producers bring in seasonal supplies of fruit and vegetables on market days, and where the buyers are retailers as well as consumers. Such markets are, however, local in character and influence ; they do not, as a rule, attract buyers from a distance. As regards potatoes, it is true that in the potato-growing areas the bulk of the supplies is sold at the point of production—in one or two market towns, such as Boston and Spalding in the case of Lincolnshire ; but these markets are merely meeting places of buyers and sellers, such as a corn exchange, where sales are effected on sample or description. There is no market in the sense of a building where supplies are assembled for disposal.*

The fruit and vegetable auctions in the West Midlands are in a different category. While large quantities of local produce are sold by private treaty to dealers, or consigned to distant wholesale markets, such as those in Birmingham, South Wales and the North, it has been estimated that, at least, a quarter and possibly a third of the total produce grown in Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, and, to a less extent, in some of the neighbouring counties, is sold in the local auctions. These are, in some cases, markets in the strict sense of the term, that is to say, they are held on premises owned by local authorities and protected by Charter or local Act. The auctions at Coventry, Gloucester, Cheltenham, Hereford and Worcester are of this character. In other cases, where there is no statutory or charter market, they are simply private auction marts. Two or three may exist in the same town. They are owned or controlled by private firms, individuals or co-operative societies.†

In the fruit-growing areas of the Eastern Counties and Kent, the auction method of marketing is seldom practised. The explanation appears to be that whereas, in the West Midlands, there are a large number of small growers who raise miscellaneous crops of fruit and vegetables, including apples, pears, plums, strawberries, beans, peas, cabbages, asparagus, lettuce, celery, mint and wallflowers, in the Eastern Counties and in Kent, the holdings are larger and the crops show less variety. In the West Midlands, some form of assembly market has, therefore, been found to be desirable to bring together the miscellaneous contributions of a large number of growers whose individual output is frequently too small to pass economically through the ordinary

* See Economic Series No. 9 (Potato Marketing).

† See also Economic Series No. 1, Chapter VI, and Economic Series No. 15 (Fruit Marketing).

commercial channels ; further, the variety of crops raised ensures for the auction a continuous supply—varying, it is true, in volume—throughout the year. In the Eastern Counties and Kent, the output of individual growers is usually large enough to justify direct consignment to distant centres of demand, while fruit production predominates and there is, therefore, a short season of supply.

(b) **Egg and Poultry Markets.***—Eggs are sold at practically all private-treaty markets in country districts. Auction sales of eggs are held in about 193 markets in England and Wales, the great majority of which are private markets. These are distributed over the Eastern Counties, the South Midlands and the Southern and South-Eastern Counties ; egg auctions are practically unknown in Cornwall, Devon, Wales and the North.

Eggs bought at country markets for consignment to distant centres are generally repacked in the market-place in the buyers' own boxes. Sometimes the eggs, so packed, are railed away there and then ; sometimes they are removed to buyers' premises—which may be anywhere within a motor journey of the market—and tested and graded before being finally repacked for dispatch. Apart from a few markets such as Carlisle, Oswestry, Welshpool and Barnstaple markets, no special provision is made to enable buyers to pack under cover. Similarly, unlike some of the markets in Northern Ireland, facilities for candling eggs are seldom, if ever, available. In view of the perishable nature of eggs and of the growing commercial importance of grading and packing, failure to provide suitable accommodation, both for the protection of supplies from sun and rain and for testing, grading and packing, may lead to the gradual displacement of country markets in areas of surplus production by collecting, grading, packing and forwarding stations which operate without the aid of local market facilities and consign produce direct to the central wholesale markets or to retail distributors in consuming centres.

Poultry, in varying quantities, is sold by private treaty at 311 public markets and 79 privately-owned markets—live poultry in 25 instances, both live and dead in 249 and dead in 116. There are also, at least, 328 private and 127 public markets at which poultry is sold by auction ; at 309 of these, live poultry only is sold ; at 137, both live and dead ; and at 9, dead only. The poultry auctions are fairly evenly distributed over the country, except in Wales and the Northern Counties of England, where there are comparatively few. The provision for poultry sales in some of the public markets is satisfactory, but many auctioneers complain of the failure of market authorities to provide them with proper facilities.

(c) **Cheese and Butter Markets.**—Facilities for the sale of butter, both by auction and by private treaty, are to be found at most country markets. At many of the markets, as, for

* See Economic Series No. 10 (Egg Marketing) ; also Economic Series No. 11 (Poultry Marketing).

example, at Carlisle, butter is sold direct by the producer to the consumer, but if a large quantity is offered, the sale is usually to a wholesale buyer. Butter is sold wholesale at almost every egg auction, but the lots are, as a rule, small and only average a few pounds. There are no country markets solely devoted to the sale of butter, though at a few, such as Carmarthen, Brecon and Pwllheli Markets, butter takes a prominent place among the commodities sold.

Markets at which cheese is sold are to be found in all the principal cheese-making districts; thus, cheese "fairs" are held in Chester every third Wednesday in the month in a separate cheese market in the public market; the trade in this case is entirely by private treaty. Fairs are also held at Nantwich. In Shropshire cheese fairs are held every third week at Shrewsbury, Wem, Whitchurch, Market Drayton and Ellesmere; nearly all the cheese disposed of through these fairs is manufactured by farmers. Cheese fairs are also held in other cheese-making districts, as, for example, at Stafford, Frome, Shepton Mallet and Yeovil. At Highbridge, Somerset, weekly auction sales of cheese are held.

(d) **Corn and Provender Markets.**—Sales of corn and provender are held at 340 centres in England and Wales, of which 118 are controlled by municipal authorities, 62 by corn exchange companies, and 160 are held in inns, streets, cattle-markets and other places. With the increase of stock and dairy farming and the decline in arable acreage, the corn exchanges outside the notably arable counties have fallen on hard times. The business which used to be transacted in them now commonly takes place elsewhere. The corn exchanges of such typical arable counties as Lincoln, Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridge, still flourish. Even in these districts, however, some of the larger exchanges, such as that at Lincoln, are now important dealers' markets, where imported wheat is dealt in as well as home-grown and where the bulk of sales is transacted between agricultural merchants.

In general, and notably in the West of England and in the Midlands, not only has the corn exchange building been diverted to other uses, but the centre for selling and buying corn, feeding stuffs and fertilisers has, in many instances, been moved to, or to some place near, the cattle market. Often the business is done in a hotel courtyard, or it may be done in the market itself and in various public houses in the neighbourhood. It seems probable that this change is not only attributable to the decline of cereal growing, but to the increased sale of imported feeding stuffs and fertilisers. The farmer has corn and provender to sell only at certain times in the year, while the imported feeding stuffs trade in one form or another is continuous. As this latter trade increased, corn-merchants were more and more inclined to follow farmers to where they could be found.

The particular place where business is conducted has no great significance from a marketing standpoint, but when the business is split up between a number of places, the advantage of a



FIG. 8.—Smithfield Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market, Birmingham.



FIG. 9.—Smithfield Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market, Manchester.



FIG. 10.—Interior of new Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market, Derby, showing stands the evening before a market day.



FIG. 11.—Exterior of new Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market, Derby, showing parking ground for motor lorries.



FIG. 12.—Wholesale Fish Market, Birmingham.



FIG. 13.—Wholesale Meat Market, Manchester.

market is lost in so far as buyers and sellers are less able to compare prices and take advantage of competition. Both traders and farmers in a corn and provender exchange are, at times, buyers and sellers, and it would be to the ultimate benefit of all parties if a common centre could be selected and adhered to in those towns where at present the business is dispersed. In towns where the corn market and the cattle market are held on different days, it might be considered whether they could not with greater advantage be held on the same day, assuming that such a change would not cause one corn market to clash with another in the immediate neighbourhood.

The accommodation required for a corn market is small. The necessary business in most market towns can be carried out in any room which is conveniently situated in regard to the cattle market provided it has sufficient space for the merchants and traders who, in some cases, have small stalls for the display of samples. In many country markets even less than this accommodation is made to serve.

(e) **Wool Auctions.***—There are under 100 seasonal auction sales of wool in country districts. These are held chiefly in the Midlands and in Wales during the months of June and July, and vary considerably in size and importance.

(ii) Markets in Consuming Centres.†

Wholesale produce markets are generally found in towns of 100,000 or more inhabitants, except where such towns are served by wholesale markets in other large towns close by. Apart from fish and fruit auctions at the ports whence produce arriving by sea is distributed inland over wide areas, mainly to other wholesale markets, there are three main classes of wholesale produce markets in consuming centres :—

- fruit, flower and vegetable markets (*see* Figs. 8 to 11) ;
- fish and poultry markets (*see* Fig. 12) ;
- meat markets (*see* Fig. 13).

With very few exceptions these are owned by local authorities. They are held daily and, apart from a few markets, particularly Covent Garden Market and Smithfield Meat Market, London, they mainly serve the needs of the district in which they are situated. They are a great convenience to the retail trade in that they enable the quality and price of large supplies of a wide range of commodities to be quickly compared and a selection made to the best advantage. They help to steady prices ; they also help to ensure that prices are a reasonably fair reflection of the relation

* *See also* Economic Series No. 7 (Wool Marketing).

† Particulars of the wool auctions in London, Liverpool, Bradford and centres in the North and West of England are given in the Report on Wool Marketing (Economic Series No. 7). The London Egg Exchange is described in the Report on Egg Marketing (Economic Series No. 10) ; other produce exchanges will be considered in subsequent Reports.

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points outside the market. The accommodation should include provision for meat inspection.

(9) For obvious reasons, the wholesale fish market should be separate but not too far distant from the wholesale fruit and vegetable market. Special attention should be given to the speedy removal of empty fish-boxes.

(10) Cold-storage accommodation, conveniently situated for the various markets, should be available for the needs of traders. In some of the larger markets there is a tendency for market authorities to undertake the provision of special warehouse accommodation for the storage of supplies.

of supply and demand. Further, the concentration of produce at wholesale markets facilitates food inspection and other public health services and makes for speedy and economical distribution. Finally, a recognised wholesale market, the tenants of which may mostly be old-established firms, should give confidence to distant suppliers.

In many cases the facilities provided by local authorities for the marketing of perishable produce of all descriptions are adequate for the requirements of their districts. By way of example, the wholesale fruit and vegetable markets at Derby and Manchester may be mentioned. The market at Derby is a good example of an up-to-date wholesale market in a medium-sized town. The market at Manchester, which has over 27,000 square yards under glass, is an important distributing centre for the North of England and supplies a population of nearly 4½ million people within a 25-mile radius. Mention should also be made of the wholesale fruit and vegetable market at Spitalfields, London, which is in course of reconstruction, and on which the City Corporation has recently decided to spend a sum of £2 million. There are, however, large towns in which no wholesale produce market has been provided. In others, again, the wholesale markets are quite unable to cope with the increased road traffic of recent years, or have so outgrown existing accommodation that the trade has overflowed into private premises. The extension of market business on to private premises takes the control out of the hands of the local authority and may make the subsequent enlargement of the market a difficult matter, or its removal to another site a somewhat uncertain venture. In some cases, the lack of adequate or suitable facilities is not less than a definite restriction of trade and adds to the cost of distribution. The grant of statutory powers to local authorities carries with it a responsibility for ensuring that the requisite facilities are provided for both wholesale and retail trade.

From views expressed by officers of local authorities and others experienced in market business, the following brief notes have been compiled to afford some indication of what may be regarded as a desirable standard in the provision of wholesale market facilities in consuming centres.

(1) The size of the market should be sufficient to provide accommodation for the ascertained or estimated requirements of all *bona fide* applicants for space who are in a position to obtain and dispose of supplies of produce. The market authority should have, at its disposal, land or property adjacent to the markets which is available for extension purposes as occasion arises. In congested markets where lateral extension is impossible, there are distinct possibilities in a double-deck system, particularly if there is a slope in the ground.

(2) Close proximity to the railways is desirable and, in view particularly of the increased use of road motor transport for the conveyance of foodstuffs, the approaches to the market

should communicate with main or arterial roads. A parking ground for vehicles should be provided (*see* Fig. 11).

(3) Adjacent to or within the wholesale market there should be space to accommodate producers or producers' organisations, who are desirous of disposing directly of their produce. In the fruit and vegetable market this need only be a plot of land, suitably paved and covered, on to which farmers can bring their vehicles and sell therefrom. In the meat market, a section should be reserved for producers and properly equipped for hanging and displaying meat.

(4) The market should be roofed for protection from the weather, well lighted, provided with louvre ventilation and glazed on the northerly side. An adequate system of artificial lighting throughout the market is essential.

(5) The regulation of traffic in wholesale markets is important ; in a number of markets, it is a stipulation that vehicles should proceed in one direction only. The roadways through the market (where vehioular traffic is permitted) should be capable of accommodating three fully-loaded vehicles abreast with clearance between them. Alternatively, the view is held that a generous provision of roadway facilities encourages traffic to loiter and that it is better practice to fix a time-limit for the loading and off-loading of vehicles. Similarly, although it is usually recommended that there should be passages of not less than 5 feet in width between each stall, or block of stalls, in order to facilitate the carrying or trucking of packages, there is support for the view that wide alleyways tend to get blocked through use as parking spaces for porter's barrows. The efficiency of a market for perishables depends, very largely, on the speed with which produce can be moved about.

(6) Each stall should have adequate frontage to facilitate the display of goods. In certain of the larger wholesale markets, the average size of stalls is about 35 square yards. The stalls should be designed to meet the particular requirements of the various branches of the trade. Where wholesale merchants have inadequate facilities for storing empties outside the market, basement or other suitable accommodation should be provided in the market.

(7) The floor of the stalls in all wholesale markets should be of impervious material and raised about 3 inches above the level of the roadways in those cases where vehicular traffic is permitted in the market. (In a number of meat markets horse and motor traffic is prohibited.) In both fish and meat markets the side walls should be tiled, or faced with other impervious and easily cleansed material.

(8) The wholesale meat market should be adjacent to and directly connected with the abattoir and a system of overhead rails provided for conveying meat from the slaughterhouses to the market and from one part of the market to another or to loading

CHAPTER VI : LIVESTOCK MARKETS (I).

(i) Development.

There are 961 livestock markets in England and Wales ; of these 224 are publicly controlled—145 by borough councils and 71 by urban district councils. The selling of livestock in markets dates from earliest times when business was conducted in "market overt," and is the accepted system in this and other countries.

About the beginning of the 19th century there was a tendency for dealers and butchers to short-circuit the markets and buy direct from neighbouring farmers who, for their part, were thus saved the payment of tolls and other market charges. In order to arrest this evasion of tolls, the laws* were enforced against "forestallers" or "engrossers" who bought produce on its way to market. It was, however, the introduction of auction selling for livestock, about the year 1836, that mostly helped to restore the markets to their old position as centres for the sale of livestock whether by auction or private treaty. Evidence of this is furnished by the numerous local Acts of this period which provided for the enlargement and improvement of markets in various parts of the country. Farmers apparently realised that, when selling privately, they had to rely on their own estimates of values, while, when dealing in the market, the prices were, at least, open to competition.

It is of interest to note the circumstances that accounted for the rapid increase in the number of livestock auction marts. Sixty years before the method was first introduced for livestock, a tax had been imposed to the extent of 1s. in the pound on all movables and 7d. in the pound on all heritable property sold by auction except when a sale took place on a farm. In proposing this tax, Lord North stated that :—

"The tax was intended to answer more purposes than those of mere finance. Auctions were multiplied of late years in all parts of the Kingdom to that excess as to be very mischievous to every fair trader, and, in many cases, were attended with circumstances of gross fraud and impositions."

The tax was abolished by Sir Robert Peel in 1845. Up to this time, before a sale could be held, the auctioneers were required to give three days' notice to the Excise Officer, to lodge with him a catalogue of the articles to be sold, and, finally, to attend the Collector of Excise every quarter, produce a copy of the roup roll, make a declaration that it was a true account, and pay the duty. It can easily be seen that this was an almost unsurmountable barrier to selling livestock by auction except upon the farm to which it belonged.

* Repealed by 7 and 8 Vict., Ch. 24.

The Royal Commission of 1893 found auctions well-established in all parts of the country; but, in the evidence given, it is clear that objections were felt to some features of the system. Thus :—

“ . . . the selling of cattle at auction marts instead of selling them privately to buyers who come round is said to be prejudicial to farmers because the system is more expensive, it causes farmers to waste more of their time, and it is asserted that butchers make rings and do not bid against each other. The butchers who attend these auctions go in for buying as low as they can. They do not, as was formerly the case, go round to the farms and get the stock, but they buy at the lowest price by auction and many farmers have to take their stock away again or sacrifice them at ruinous prices.”

In spite of these criticisms, which are to be heard even to-day, auctions have continued to grow and there are now 924 livestock auctions in England and Wales. Of these, 402 are held weekly, 263 fortnightly, 17 once every three weeks, 146 monthly and 96 at intervals of more than one month. A few are owned or controlled by farmers' co-operative societies and a number, particularly in the North, by farmers' joint stock companies.*

The reversion from private dealing to dealing in markets was not, of course, complete. In Nottinghamshire, for example, it is estimated that the proportion of store cattle, milk cows, sheep and pigs that pass through the hands of dealers and go direct from farm to farm, or from dealers' land to farms, is still about 20 per cent. There are districts where the percentage is even higher. In Scotland and the North the proportion would probably not greatly exceed 10 per cent.

It should also be borne in mind that, in certain districts at any rate, a tendency in the other direction seems once more to have set in. This is attributable to a variety of causes. The War is said to be partly responsible in that it brought buyers into close personal contact with producers. Probably, a more weighty reason is that during periods of foot-and-mouth disease and swine fever, when farmers are unable to dispose of their stock at the usual markets, they enlist the services of dealers to dispose of their fat stock to butchers, or they may themselves send direct to butchers in the scheduled area; in some cases, these relationships have continued long after the restrictions have been removed. It is possible that the present tendency for farmers to dispose of their fat stock without recourse to local markets is not without significance. In certain areas, it is noticeable that wholesale butchers are steadily increasing their purchases from farmers direct. Wholesalers in meat markets who accept fat stock for slaughter and sale on commission seem also, in some cases, to be extending their business.

* See Economic Series No. 1, Chapter VII.

A further change in marketing conditions has been brought about by the development of transport. The increase in railway facilities, and, more recently, the enormous increase in motor traffic, has enabled the farmer to send his produce to more distant markets than formerly. As a result, some markets have grown considerably; others—notably the smaller livestock markets—are declining. In fact, a number of livestock markets have become insignificant from the point of view of supplies and some are moribund. It must be remembered that the circumstances that have combined to extend the selling range of farmers have also extended the buying range of traders; cheap railway fares and an ever-increasing network of omnibus services make it possible for buyers to operate over wide areas; many have their own motor cars.

It is of interest to refer briefly to the function of livestock markets during the Food Control period. The Food Controller divided Great Britain into 19 areas for the control of livestock—13 for England and Wales and 6 for Scotland. These corresponded with the food control areas, thus co-ordinating wholesale and retail distribution. A Livestock Commissioner was appointed for each area with comprehensive powers for the regulation of slaughter; in each market-district, a deputy chairman of auctioneers supervised the selling and allocation of livestock. All beasts and sheep, with certain exceptions, went through the markets, sales being under the control of a local auctioneers' committee and of a grading committee. For the purposes of meat distribution, markets were divided into (a) local markets and (b) distributing markets. Farms in a market-district were attached to the local market and farmers sent their stock there or to the nearest distributing market according to instructions. At the latter the cattle were allocated to buyers or taken over by the Ministry of Food at prices not exceeding a schedule of maximum prices for each grade of stock. The farmers' selection committee arranged for the proper proportion of local cattle to be supplied to the local market. In each county there was at least one distributing market selected for its geographical position, railway communication and market facilities. The auction system was dropped. Stock for slaughter was graded as to quality at the local market and the farmer was paid according to live weight and grade. An alternative method was introduced at a later stage by which the farmer was paid for his stock after slaughter, when its dressed weight could be accurately ascertained. In order that farmers might have confidence in this method, a number of slaughterhouses were put under co-operative control.*

The livestock markets of the present day may, in general, be broadly divided into assembly markets in producing areas and distributive markets in consuming centres. In a country so thickly populated as England and Wales, these distinctions

* See also Economic Series No. 1, Chapter VIII.

tend, it is true, to be obscured. Even in producing areas there is, of course, a local demand, as a rule easily satisfied by a small proportion of the supplies. Conversely, many distributive markets in consuming centres draw most of their supplies from surrounding districts. Though some markets are, as it were, on the border line, the distinction is, nevertheless, useful.

It may be added that, in most counties, cattle markets are usually held twice weekly or weekly; in some counties, fortnightly markets are the rule in all but the principal market towns. The frequency of the larger markets is justified, but some of the smaller markets might well be held less often. A good sale once a month is far better than four bad sales. Markets for fat and store stock respectively are frequently held on separate days, fat stock on a day that will allow for selling the carcasses for the week-end trade, according to whether buyers are mainly wholesale or retail butchers. In the more important assembly markets in producing areas the separation of "fat" and "store" days is an aid to efficiency, promotes trade and prepares the way for large seasonal sales of each category of stock. The importance of the store-stock markets is naturally seasonal, as stores are chiefly in demand in the spring months and again in the late summer and autumn.

A change in the market day is, as a rule, to be deprecated, but one or two markets would seem likely to benefit by a change. At Peterborough the fat-cattle market is said to suffer from lack of buyers, since the market is held on the same day as the markets at Nottingham, Leicester, Wellingborough and Northampton. At Bridgnorth there has been an agitation for 30 years to have the market day changed from Saturday to Friday. In general, it should be remembered that livestock sold in exporting areas in markets held on Saturdays, or even on Fridays in some cases, may be delayed on the railway, or at unloading centres, until Monday morning. On the other hand, many dealers, for credit reasons, are said to prefer Saturday markets.

(ii) Private-treaty Markets.

Until the rise of auction marts all markets were private-treaty markets and although auctions have now been established at most public markets, a considerable amount of private-treaty dealing still continues in them. There are, further, a number of important markets in the country in which private treaty is the sole or the main method of business. Returns collected show that out of 961 cattle markets 796 are auction markets only, 128 are both auction and private-treaty, 37 are private-treaty markets only. It may be added that private-treaty markets are common throughout the Continent, auction marts being altogether exceptional.

Markets in which private treaty is the main form of sale fall into two classes. The first and smaller class consists of a few large fat-stock markets in large towns, such as Leeds and Liverpool. These seem to be largely dealers' markets; wholesale butchers preponderate among the buyers. In such markets both

sellers and buyers are thoroughly accustomed to valuation and to dealing in large numbers; attempts to introduce the auction system have not succeeded. The second class consists of the large store-stock markets and, in particular, those to which large numbers of Irish cattle are consigned. At some of these markets auction sales practically never take place; at Bristol, for instance, there are no auction sales except an occasional sale of pedigree stock, the main trade of the market being the sale of Irish stores by private treaty. At others there is a certain amount of auction selling of fat stock. Hull, Norwich and Doncaster, which are large collecting centres for both fat and store cattle, are among markets where both private-treaty sales (for stores) and auction selling (for fat stock) flourish. Dublin cattle market is a good example of a large private dealing market for both fat and store stock.

The private-treaty market can only be satisfactory if both buyers and sellers know their business thoroughly and are well acquainted with current values. Hence, private-treaty markets of store stock are probably most useful where dealers and farmers are both operating on a considerable scale.

The facilities required for a private-dealing market are less elaborate than those for an auction mart where cattle have to be moved through the auction ring. While a weighing machine must be provided in a private-dealing market where tolls are taken, the law does not make its use compulsory as in the case of fat cattle passing through an auction ring.

(iii) Auction Sales of Fat Stock.

At auction sales fat cattle are usually sold through the ring. Sheep and calves are generally auctioned from the pens in the Midlands and in the South (see Fig. 14), though in the North of England and in Scotland it is a common practice to sell them through the auction rings (see Fig. 25).

The bulk of the supplies of fat stock disposed of in auction markets, particularly the smaller markets, comes, in general, from within a radius of no more than from 10 to 12 miles round the market. In the Midlands this holds whether the market is in a producing or a consuming area. In the North some of the larger markets draw stock from a much wider radius, especially supplies of fat sheep and lambs, while markets that draw on neighbouring areas where grass-fed beasts are mainly produced have, at times, to supplement their supplies by stall-fed cattle from a distance. These distant supplies may amount to 50 per cent. or more of the fat stock handled, but they are usually dealers' animals that have already changed hands in an auction mart or by private treaty.

One reason for the predominance of short-range marketing is that it enables the farmer to get rid of his animals in good condition without taking a speculative risk in transferring them to more distant markets. Another, and, perhaps, stronger,

reason is that, unless circumstances are exceptional, farmers always prefer to be present when they have stock for sale, and no changes designed to improve sale by auction that did not take account of this fact would stand any chance of success in the case of farmers' markets. Auctioneers encourage the practice as being likely to promote confidence. The distance which a farmer can reasonably travel to attend a market is, therefore, a limiting factor, but, with modern transport facilities, it should be feasible for a large market to serve an area of from 20 to 30 miles radius.

Four kinds of livestock auction markets can be distinguished :—

- small marts in producing areas ;
- large marts in producing areas (*see Fig. 15*) ;
- small marts close to consuming centres ;
- large marts in consuming centres (*see Fig. 16*).

The small country auction suffers from a number of disadvantages. Unless the district is one with special advantages for fattening, so that the general average of fat stock pitched is unusually and consistently high, it is not worth while for buyers from a distance to attend the market regularly. Buyers then tend to become local butchers and a fluctuating clientele of dealers. As supplies are apt to vary considerably from market to market, it follows that prices tend to fluctuate excessively. In a small market, again, there is more possibility of "ringing." Further, the individual producer of high-grade stock receives little or no encouragement, since those buyers who are prepared to pay for quality do not usually attend. By way of illustration, it may be mentioned that an attempt was recently made by an auctioneer to start a market some four miles from the nearest railway centre and close to other livestock markets. At one of the sales, seven sheep and two pigs were offered. It is obvious that such a sale is of no assistance to the producer. In some cases auctioneers frankly admit that they carry on small country auctions at a loss in order to retain their connection with farmers for other purposes.

Farmers who send regularly to small country auctions frequently complain that prices compare unfavourably with those realised in the bigger country markets and in the markets in consuming centres. Prices realised in producing areas and consuming centres should not, of course, be compared without making allowance for transport and other charges. But the prices realised in the small country markets can be fairly compared with prices in the large country markets for a similar grade and quality of beast, and the difference is a measure of the advantage of a better marketing system. In many districts it would clearly be to the advantage of producers to take their stock to larger markets further afield rather than to use the smaller markets merely because they are close at hand.



FIG. 14.—Sheep Pens, Midland Marts, Ltd., Banbury.



FIG. 15.—Cattle Ring, Midland Marts, Ltd., Banbury.



FIG. 14.—Sheep Pens, Midland Marts, Ltd., Banbury.



FIG. 15.—Cattle Ring, Midland Marts, Ltd., Banbury.

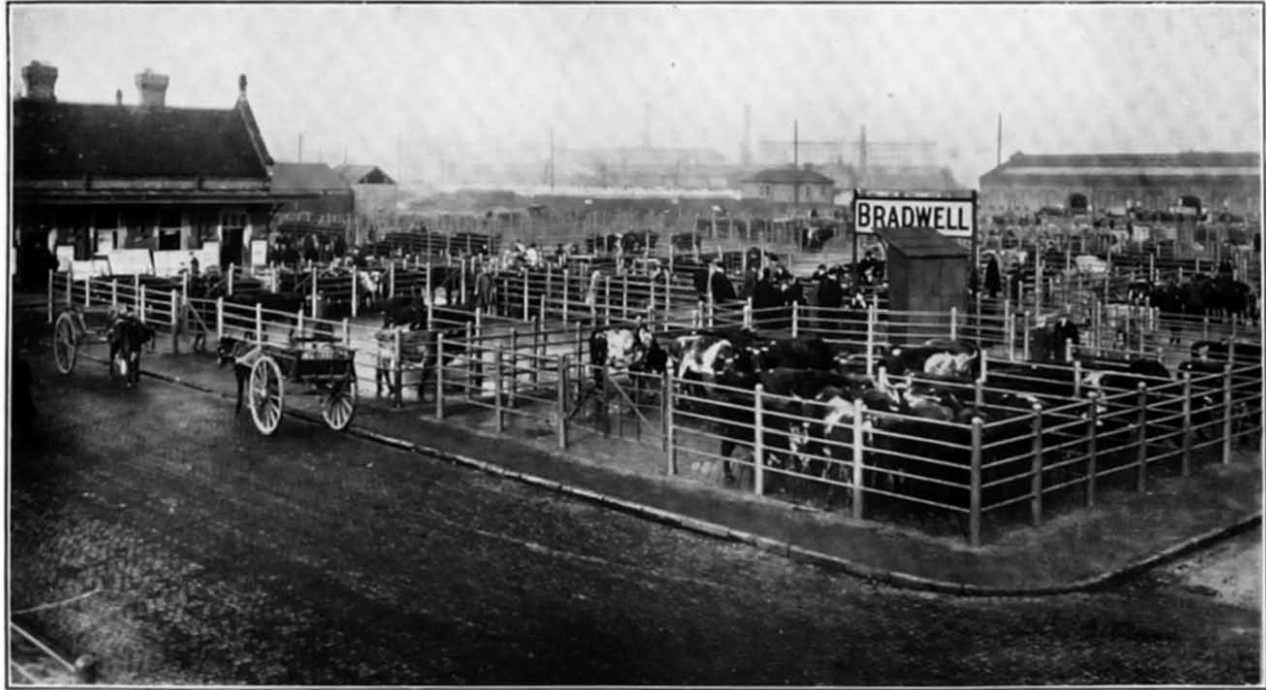


FIG. 16.—The Cattle Market, Nottingham.

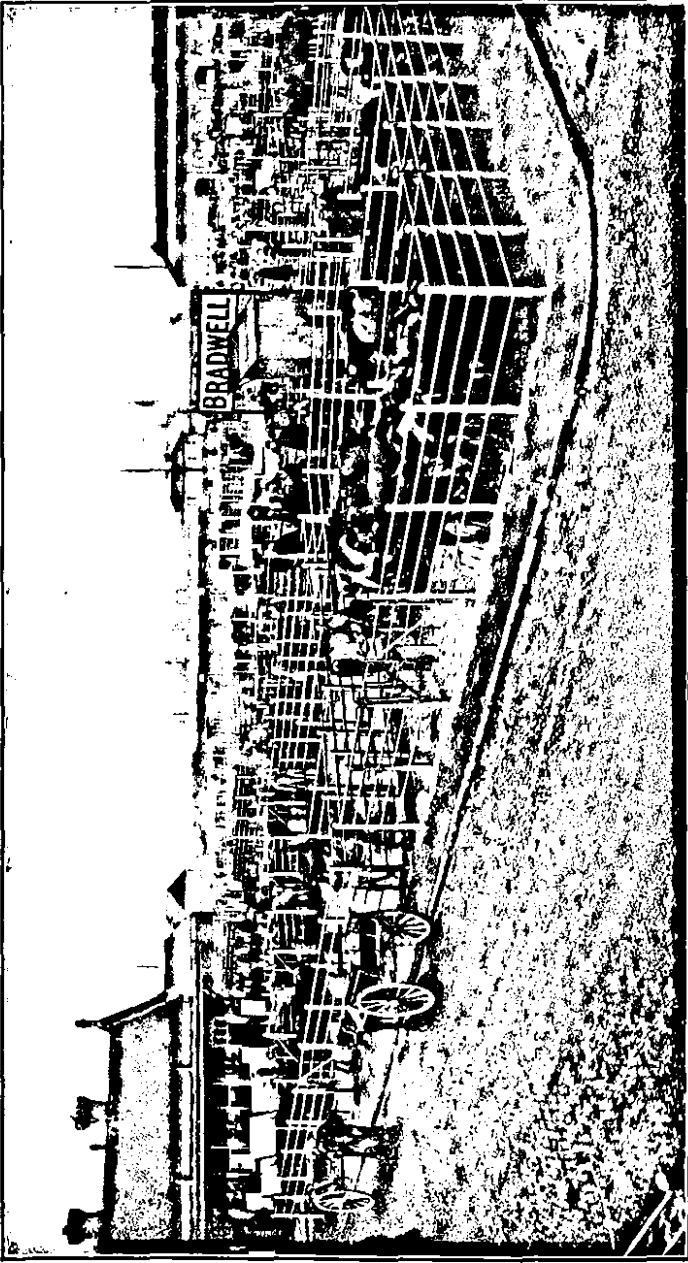


FIG. 16.—The Cattle Market, Nottingham.

At present the relative importance of the country markets in a district depends largely on the energy and efficiency of the auctioneers. Thus, in a period of years, one market becomes the leading centre and is, in turn, displaced by another with the rise and decline of a firm of auctioneers. Only rarely does one market in these circumstances become so large as to establish a permanent leadership and develop into such a dominant centre as, for instance, has happened at Shrewsbury or Rugby. It may be suggested that if producers took a keener interest in the size of the market to which they send their stock and appreciated the disadvantages of selling in small markets, auctioneers would be less tempted to continue or open markets unnecessarily. A greater step forward would be made if, in areas with too many small markets, some understanding were reached between farmers, auctioneers and other interests by which centralisation could be effected. This is referred to later.

In Scotland where, unlike England, cattle markets are largely under private ownership, many small markets have been eliminated in the last 20 years. This is undoubtedly connected with the rise of a large firm of auctioneers, Messrs. Macdonald Fraser & Co. This firm, which has an issued capital of £221,960, has its registered offices in Perth and branch establishments at Glasgow, Dunfermline, Thornton, Milnathort, Blairgowrie, Aberfeldy, Kingussie, Grantown-on-Spey, Inverness, Lairg (Sutherland) and Aberdeen. It has also a controlling holding in Messrs. Speedie Bros., who have centres at Stirling, Cupar, Ladybank, Anstruther and Oban. The business was founded in 1864, and from an initial turnover in stock of about 7,000 sheep and 1,600 cattle, it has increased to a total at all centres in 1925 of 586,200 sheep, 95,258 cattle, 4,270 horses and 5,300 milch cows. Small auctions cannot survive when the business is concentrated in this way. In England, on the other hand, few auctioneers sell at more than three or four markets.

The large assembly markets in producing areas, such as Shrewsbury, Rugby, Northampton, Gloucester, and the Midland Marts, Ltd., at Banbury, are distinguished from other country markets by the greater proportion of supplies which come from a distance. In general these supplies are sent in by dealers and not by farmers. In this connection, the example of Scotland may again be quoted. A leading firm of auctioneers states that while Scottish farmers are careful to attend the sale of their stock, they seldom send fat stock on foot for more than four or five miles, and for greater distances make use of the railway or, to an increasing extent, of motor-floats. As the transport of stock by rail is expensive, except for large numbers, such a system is only worked economically because a constant stream of beasts is sent in by rail to ensure full wagons and low rates. This involves organisation. In England a relatively small amount of fat stock goes by rail to market, except dealers' stock. Any attempt, therefore, to centralise markets in country districts could only be successful if the forwarding of stock by rail or motor were organised as in Scotland.

Markets in consuming centres have different problems to meet. Normally one would expect to find a central market to which all the animals of the surrounding neighbourhood were consigned for sale. Instances of such markets are to be found in the Midlands at Nottingham, Leicester and Derby. This, however, is not the only system used. In districts close to large consuming centres there is a tendency for small markets to exist. Instances of this are to be seen in Monmouthshire, near the industrial districts of South Wales, in Staffordshire and round Birmingham. Most of these small markets show greater liveliness than the small country market in producing areas, because buyers are for the most part retail butchers who require beasts for immediate slaughter and are said to prefer such markets rather than face the competition of the large buyer in a central market. It should, however, be recognised that if such markets are multiplied, competition among buyers is diminished. A limited number of large markets in an industrial area appears, therefore, to be a preferable arrangement.

One difficulty may, however, be mentioned. When cities become very large, it is not always possible to keep a cattle market in existence. Birmingham, for instance, had, at one time, a flourishing cattle market; now it receives no supplies. The former cattle trade has gone to the small country markets surrounding the city, while, in addition, increasing quantities of home-produced meat are being sent direct to the abattoir and wholesale meat market. Most of these animals are sent in by wholesale butchers, but some are consigned by farmers to be sold on commission on a dead weight basis. This example suggests that, in the largest towns, the dead-meat markets might in time interfere with the fat-stock business of the small neighbouring auctions or even absorb it completely (*see also page 59*).

Livestock markets in consuming centres seem to have no special difficulties in normal times in adjusting supply and demand. Most of them are old-established and have a level trade. In the large markets, unless conditions are exceptional, there are always a sufficient number of large buyers to absorb the supplies; in the small markets, wholesalers are usually present who will take surpluses, while farmers, in general, fix reserves which prevent such markets being glutted.

(iv) Auction Sales of Store Stock.

Taking the country as a whole, a smaller percentage of store stock is sold by auction than is the case with fat stock. This is mainly due to the fact that the majority of stores, if exposed for sale in a market at all, are the property of dealers, who have collected them from farms in the store-raising districts of the country and have transported them for sale in the fattening districts. Dealers (amongst whom must be included dealers in Irish cattle) whose living depends on their ability to drive a good bargain naturally tend to patronise private-treaty markets,

such as exist at St. Ives, Peterborough, Norwich, Northampton and York, to the exclusion of auction marts.

In addition to the number of stores which change hands direct from farm to farm, or which are sold at private-treaty markets, a considerable number are purchased at *seasonal* sales organised by auctioneers at different centres throughout the country, such as at Reading, Chichester, Salisbury, Carlisle and Banbury. These seasonal sales are often the outcome of fairs. It must not be supposed, however, that the *weekly* auction mart, as a means of disposing of store stock, is not used. It is used to as full an extent as the seasonal variations of the trade allow, but it is obvious that organised seasonal sales of store stock, either by private treaty or by auction, whether in large markets, such as Leicester, or in the small auction marts, such as exist in the valleys of Yorkshire and Lancashire, are a convenient method of meeting the necessarily fluctuating demands of the store cattle and store sheep trade.

The question whether store stock should be sold by private treaty or by auction is one on which opinion varies in different parts of the country. In Northumberland, Westmorland and the North generally, a large percentage of store stock, both sheep and cattle, is sold through the auctions in bunches ranging from 10 to 30 in the case of cattle and from 20 to 60 in the case of sheep; the same also applies to Scotland. This may be due to the fact that the auction system saves time and has been found to have competitive advantages. At certain markets in the Midlands and the South all store-stock is sold by private treaty. Canadian and Irish store cattle are, as a rule, sold by private treaty even in the North of England, probably because they are consigned by dealers. Recently a few auction sales of Irish stores have been specially organised in this country, the stores offered having been consigned direct by Irish breeders; the average number on offer at any one sale would appear to be about 500.

The trade in store pigs differs from the trade in store cattle and sheep in that, with the exception of the smaller markets, store pigs are almost invariably sold by auction at the same markets as fat pigs.

(v) Weighing and Sale by Weight.

Under the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act, 1926, an auctioneer shall not offer for sale in any market, fair or mart, in or near which a weighing machine is provided for the purpose of complying with the provisions of the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts, 1887 and 1891, any cattle which are fit for immediate slaughter unless they have been weighed on the weighing machine and their weight disclosed by the auctioneer to intending purchasers at the time of offer for sale. Exemptions can, however, be made by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries in certain circumstances. The Act does not apply to cattle sold by private treaty.

Of the 710 markets affected by the Act, in only about 250 has it already been more or less the practice for cattle to be weighed before sale.

In the more up-to-date markets, where dial weighbridges have been installed, the weighbridges are placed at the entrance of the selling ring, and as the cattle stand on the weighbridge before passing into the ring, the weight of each beast is recorded on the dial (*see* Fig. 17). Where the dial has no fixed pointer, the weights are in some cases chalked up on a blackboard—which, however, is rarely consulted, except in the North of England—or more often are not recorded at all.

Although, therefore, the Act of 1926 is a step in the right direction, it still remains to convince the seller of the usefulness of the dial weighbridge. The buyer who is handling large quantities of stock obviously has greater opportunities of confirming his skill in making purchases “by eye” than has the seller. The seller would, therefore, be well advised to translate his sales of cattle into the prices per cwt. which his beasts fetch. Auctioneers would be acting in the farmers’ interest in emulating the example of Shrewsbury, which, it is claimed, was the first market where a weighbridge was erected and animals were publicly weighed before entering the sale ring. At this market the weight of the bunch of cattle and the average weight of each are placed on a blackboard within view of sellers and buyers, who, with the aid of a ready-reckoner, can see at a glance what is the price per cwt. live weight. It is suggested that ready-reckoners in large type should be posted conspicuously on the walls of all livestock auction rings. With a few exceptions, notably in Cornwall, bidding by live weight is not practised, though it might usefully be tried in markets in other parts of the country.

It has been proved in Scotland that the installation of weighbridges and their use by farmers, who convert the weights and prices by ready-reckoner into terms of price per live cwt., have not only contributed to the improvement in livestock auctions which has admittedly taken place during the last 20 years, but have given the farmers more confidence in the auction system and supplied them with valuable data regarding the value of stock.

(vi) Auction Selling Charges.

Auctioneers’ charges for selling usually average from $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the gross price realised; they are usually made at a fixed rate per £1, but, in some markets, they are made on a per head basis. As a general rule, they can hardly be regarded as out of proportion to the services rendered, to the expenses, such as rent, book-keeping, bad debts, advertising, &c., which auctioneers incur, or to the fact that auctioneers have to carry the risk of their markets being closed for long periods as a result of foot-and-mouth disease. Competition also plays an important part in keeping charges within reasonable limits. At the same

time, it must be admitted that, in the course of a year, the commission paid to auctioneers for the sale of livestock on a farm of even medium size is a very considerable item of expenditure. The scope for economies is not great, but cheaper selling should be possible if overhead charges could be spread over a larger turnover by, for example, eliminating the smaller marts, by reducing the number of auctioneers selling the same class of stock in a large market, or by amalgamating the control of some of the larger marts.

(vii) The Credit Factor.*

Auctioneers sometimes allow farmers to buy livestock on credit, on condition that the stock is resold in their markets. In some districts, auctioneers also give credit to butchers who buy at their sales. The suggestion is sometimes made that the "hold" which auctioneers thus acquire over supplies is inimical to farmers' interests.

It should be pointed out, however, that, if wisely used, such a "hold" may be beneficial rather than otherwise. Normally, it would not be to the advantage of an auctioneer who has given credit to a farmer to press him to sell the stock concerned unless it were ready for sale, since the auctioneer would, thereby, do no good to the reputation of his market and would lose by obtaining a smaller commission. Further, it would only be to his interest to call on farmers to sell if the stock entered for a particular sale were less than usual and if prices were likely, therefore, to be better.

In point of fact, the credit arrangement referred to above is in general use by all successful auctioneers and is, no doubt, one way of securing a strong and regular market, which is, of course, desirable from a producers' standpoint. It is probable, too, that, in present circumstances, the credit which flows into agriculture from this source is of great value in financing production. The system is one which the farmer understands and is ready to use, and there is no reason to suppose that he pays unduly for it. He may, perhaps, have to pay more than if he used ordinary bank credit, but as short-term bank credit is not, at present, used by farmers here to the extent that it is abroad, credit from auctioneers is a useful substitute. There is also the point that an auctioneer is in a better position to know the value of the stock on which he is, in effect, lending the money, than the manager of a bank could be. A less desirable form of credit is where the auctioneer finances the purchase of the stock and, on re-sale, recoups himself by taking half the gross profit.

It is interesting to note the details of a credit scheme which has been started, comparatively recently, by a firm of auctioneers in the Midlands. Farmers who apply for credit are divided into classes. The first consists of farmers of good standing who are short of capital. These are given credit to purchase stock on

* See also Economic Series No. 8 (Report on Agricultural Credit), p. 31.

signing a document that they will, when disposing of them, sell them through the auction. In the event of bad trade, they can withdraw them from a sale and sell later on. The only charge, besides the ordinary commission of 3*d.* in the £ for selling, is an interest charge of 1 per cent. above the rate which the firm has to pay the bank for any money it borrows for this purpose. The second class consists of farmers whose credit is doubtful. These buy through the auction but transfer the stock afterwards to the firm. An agreement is signed by which the firm undertakes, if necessary, to advance further sums to defray the cost of feeding. When the stock is ready for market the farmer brings them back to the mart and the total proceeds of sale are handed to him, less the same amount that would have been deducted in the case of transactions in the first class. In both cases, the farmer, through the market, is secured the maximum profit according to his ability to buy and feed satisfactorily. Apart from interest charges, the scheme, in fact, places him in as good a position to stock his land as the wealthiest farmer. It may be noted that in Scotland, where the Bills of Sale Acts do not apply, an arrangement of this kind has been common practice for many years.

This scheme undoubtedly ties the farmer to the market, but there is a safeguard in the fact that the firm in question has a strong producer element in its composition. Experience shows that failures among co-operative livestock auctions can usually be traced to their inability to cope with the credit problem. In most cases they have not sufficient capital to give the same credit facilities as the private auctioneer, and, consequently, go under. If, however, these societies were in a position to give adequate credit to their members and other buyers in the market, the fact that members would thereby be tied would be an advantage, for it would strengthen the market which is working in their interests in exactly the same way as the contract system strengthens other forms of co-operative marketing.

CHAPTER VII : LIVESTOCK MARKETS (II).

(i) Auction "Rings."

Under the Sale of Goods Act, 1893, a vendor may not himself bid for the commodities which he is offering for sale; he may not employ anyone else to bid for him, nor may the auctioneer knowingly accept such a bid unless the right to bid has been expressly reserved in the advertised conditions of sale. Such is the law governing the practice known in various parts of the country as "bogus-bidding" or "trotting."

When buyers in combination agree not to bid in competition in order to obtain the goods offered for sale at a low figure they are said to have formed a "ring." Goods so obtained are usually divided up among the members of the "ring," either at an agreed price or by further private auction. The latter procedure is termed a "knock-out." It is known that "rings" exist in agricultural markets of all kinds, but it is hard to prove that "ringing" is actually taking place. An auctioneer is not, of course, bound to accept a bid if he knows that it comes from a member of a "ring."

The practice of "ringing" is not, in itself, illegal. In the case of *Levi v. Levi*, which was decided in 1833, Baron Gurney laid down the law as follows: "Owners of goods have a right to expect at an auction that there will be an open competition from the public; and if a knot of men go to an auction upon an agreement among themselves of the kind that has been described, they are guilty of an indictable offence and may be tried for conspiracy."*

This judgment has, on more than one occasion, been adversely criticised, particularly by Mr. Justice Wright in the case of *Leopard v. Litoun*. In that case, it appeared that, in 1896, the Government held a sale of surplus stores at Woolwich Arsenal, and among the lots sold was one consisting of four cases of sweet spirit of nitre. Prior to the sale it had been arranged between the plaintiff and defendant that they should not bid against each other, that the defendant should purchase the goods and that, after the sale, they should agree as to how the goods should be disposed. At the sale the goods were knocked down to the defendant for £5, and it was subsequently arranged that the defendant should sell the goods to the plaintiff for £6. The value of the goods was £13 10s. The defendant failed to perform his part of the contract and the plaintiff thereupon sued him. The deputy county court Judge held that the arrangement between the parties prior to the sale was a conspiracy to cheat the Government and accordingly non-suited the plaintiff. The plaintiff appealed on the grounds that there was no conspiracy and, even if there were, it did not affect the subsequent contract. Mr. Justice Wright said that he could

* H. Hart: "Law relating to Auctioneers."

see nothing illegal in what the parties had done and expressed the view that *Levi v. Levi* was not law. This view was affirmed by a majority of the judges in the case, in the Court of Appeal, of *Rawlings v. General Trading Company* (1921, 1 King's Bench, page 635).

It therefore seems that a "knock-out" *per se*, is not indictable or even illegal. Yet it may be observed that such a proceeding is not unlikely to bring in its train unfair and fraudulent practices on the part of the associates which may render them, in the result, indictable for conspiracy. Reference might also be made to a recent decision given by Mr. Justice McCardie in June, 1926, that the existence of a "knock-out" does not make a sale invalid—although the "unfair and injurious system of knock-outs was far too prevalent."

A Bill was introduced by Lord Darling in the 1926 Session of Parliament to make illegal any agreement not to bid at an auction sale in competition with any other person with intent that the property offered for sale shall be afterwards acquired by the person making the agreement, or some other person, from the purchaser of the property at the sale. The Bill did not succeed in passing before the Session concluded. It has been introduced in the House of Commons in the present Session and has been given a Second Reading.

Although some auctioneers affirm that they have never had evidence of "rings" and that "rings" exist only in the imagination of a few disappointed sellers, it does, unfortunately, appear to be the case that "ringing" has increased in recent years in the smaller and less efficient markets. The usual way of combating the evil is either by reserving, on behalf of the vendor, the right to bid, or by reserving the animals to be sold at a certain figure; if the reserve is not reached, it is understood that the farmer is prepared to take his beasts home again. There is no doubt, however, that, in the case of livestock auctions, "ringing" can best be countered by concentrating supplies on the larger markets, or by sending direct to abattoirs in touch with wholesale meat markets.

(ii) Conditions of Sale.*

Except in a few instances, conditions of sale are posted by the auctioneers in all livestock markets. On the whole, there is substantial agreement between the main conditions laid down, though there is considerable variation in phrasing. The main variation of an important character relates to the right or disability of a vendor to bid for his own stock; uniformity in this respect would be an advantage.

In a number of cases, the auctioneer reserves, on behalf of the vendor, the right to bid. In others, all lots are to be sold to the highest bidder unless the auctioneer is given a reserve in writing before the sale; this is, in effect much the same as the practice which prevails at other auctions where a vendor may

* For particulars, see Appendix II, page 73.

bid once only. At other auctions, again, the practice is for the vendor to bid up to the reserve price. The important point in connection with vendors' bids, is that they are illegal unless notified on the conditions of sale.

It is the general practice in auctions of land and houses for the vendor to reserve the right to bid in the conditions of sale; in such auctions, time is not usually of paramount importance. It is questionable, however, whether it is desirable for the auctioneer to make a practice of allowing bidding by vendors at livestock auctions, since, if persisted in, it defeats its own object, and, in most cases, causes delay. Fixing a reserve price is, of course, a different matter and is, in many cases, essential to protect the interests of the vendor.

Some conditions of sale include special clauses relating to warranties and descriptions. In a number of cases special lists of such conditions for the sale of dairy cows and horses are printed for information. This appears to be a desirable practice. Definite allowances are sometimes prescribed for cows sold down-calving and for cows not calving within a specified time. In Wiltshire, for example, several auctioneers have been asked to agree to a suggestion that where the animal fails to calve within 20 days of the date stated at the auction, the vendor shall allow 5s. per week in summer and 10s. in winter until the calving takes place. In view of the great importance of warranties, particularly in markets where dairy cattle are sold, an agreed scheme applied throughout the country would probably be of service to such markets.

For these and other reasons, it would, therefore, seem desirable that, as in the case of wool, standard conditions of sale should be laid down by the Auctioneers Institute, after consultation with the users of the markets.* A point for consideration is whether a rule should not be introduced into the standard conditions to prevent buyers from entering the ring in the case of cattle sales. Such a rule would have a great effect in speeding up business. The example of Scotland, where the custom of excluding buyers from the ring is general, seems to show that it can be adopted without hardship to buyers.

The mere drafting of conditions of sale might, however, be of little value unless their observance could be made obligatory on members by the professional organisations concerned. This leads to the question whether the Auctioneers Institute should have more responsibility in regard to auctioneers' licences. At present, these are granted, without inquiry, by the Board of Customs and Excise on payment of an annual fee of £10. In other countries, such as Australia, some scrutiny of licences is required by law.

* See also Economic Series No. 7 (Wool Marketing), Economic Series No. 10 (Egg Marketing) and Economic Series No. 11 (Poultry Marketing).

(iii) Livestock Street Markets.

It is remarkable that while nearly all livestock markets must have originally been held in the street or open market place, the exceptions being privately-owned auction marts of recent date, comparatively few livestock street markets exist at the present day. This is, in itself, a testimony to the greater convenience of the properly-equipped market, removed from the street and, as a rule, situated near a railway station. The acquisition of a new site and the building of a new market usually involve considerable expense which would not be incurred without good reason.

The impulse to provide a better alternative to the street market may have originated in, or been reinforced by, the growth of auctions. Proper sale-rings are a great convenience to all concerned and, in the nature of things, are not to be found in a street market. A market place without pens, without sale-rings, without any covered accommodation, must necessarily make business slower and more difficult to transact, and this alone should induce the authorities concerned to afford better facilities. Further, it has been proved that a street market jeopardises the success of any attempt to establish an efficient market under satisfactory conditions in the same centre. Finally, it is practically impossible to pass all fat cattle over a weighbridge in the street.

There are also other features of the street market which help to make it an anachronism (*see* Figs. 18 and 19). It leads to unnecessary cruelty. Fat beasts are bruised in the endeavour to keep them under control and lose value. It is undesirable from a sanitary and public health standpoint. Lastly, there can be no question that, from a traffic standpoint, the existence of street markets is a nuisance. In some cases, indeed, the congestion is such that it is difficult for vehicles to pass through the streets where the market is in progress; in all cases, there is the danger of stock breaking away.

It may be asked why the local authorities concerned—nearly all street markets are owned by local authorities—do not provide proper accommodation. Many reasons could, no doubt, be put forward, including the difficulty of extinguishing market rights, and the opposition of vested interests. Shop-keepers fear that if the market is removed from the square, their trade may suffer. Licensees of public-houses adjacent to the market place are naturally averse to any alteration which would take the market away. Hence there is usually a considerable body of local opinion ready to support those who urge that the market has been in its present position from time immemorial, and what was good enough then is good enough to-day.

Farmers, on the other hand, are well aware that they stand to gain by the provision of proper market accommodation. In fact, in some of the worst cases, farmers refuse to send their stock to the market because the facilities offered are so poor.



FIG. 17.—Cattle Auction Market, Bridgnorth.



FIG. 18.—A livestock street market.



FIG. 19.—A country livestock market 20 years ago.
(Reproduced from "The Field" and by courtesy of Mr. W. Carter Platts.)

The small-holder, with a fat beast to sell, has a special grievance. He cannot afford to pay a drover to mind the animal and he is, therefore, compelled to remain by it, perhaps for half the morning, till it is put through the auction. In an ordinary market, as soon as the beast is driven into the allotted pen, he would be free for any other business. Auctioneers, it need hardly be said, are almost universally against street markets, which they regard as a serious handicap to their business. Dealers, with store stock to offer, probably find that a street market provides sufficient accommodation for their purpose, but, when dealing in fat cattle, they are in much the same position as the farmer or the butcher, and welcome improved facilities.

The impossibility of marketing cattle efficiently in the streets, the cruelty and the waste of time which street markets cause, the likelihood that they may spread disease and their interference with traffic seem strong *prima facie* reasons for abolishing all livestock markets held in public thoroughfares. If, as is often the case, the markets are nothing more than small-paved areas in the corner of market-places where, every week or fortnight, a few beasts are sold to local buyers at poor prices, it would be an advantage, from a marketing standpoint, if they ceased to exist altogether. If they are big markets attracting large buyers, it should be an economic proposition to provide satisfactory accommodation.

Some exception might perhaps be made in favour of annual sales and cattle fairs held in the street, but only on the ground that the nuisance is less frequent. Further, these tend to diminish as the practice of selling by auction extends.

(iv) Accommodation in Livestock Markets.

In general, the lay-out of cattle markets is on a common plan, though, in some cases, the facilities are not as convenient as they might be. From views expressed by market superintendents, auctioneers and others experienced in market practice, the following notes have been prepared to show what are commonly regarded as desirable features of a well-planned livestock market.

(1) Where possible, the cattle market should have its own railway sidings leading direct, by a separate market road, into the market. Where this is not possible, the narrow streets of the town should be avoided by using by-pass roads. The cattle market should in no case be more than a mile from the railway and should be near main roads.

(2) The roadways in the market should be wide and paved. The pens should be so placed as to permit of easy access from the unloading banks at the railway sidings, or from the roads by which stock are brought in direct by sellers, and should give easy access to the drawing pens through which the animals pass prior to entering the sale-rings. To avoid damage and unnecessary suffering to the animals, efficient, movable, unloading banks should be provided for calves, sheep and pigs arriving by road vehicles.

(3) For store cattle, there is no great advantage in covering the pens, unless the covered accommodation is up to date and permits of good lighting. For fat-stock, dairy cattle, calves and pigs, covered accommodation is desirable (*see* Fig. 20). Byres and sheds should be well ventilated and free from draught. At the larger Scottish livestock markets, notably Edinburgh and Glasgow, and at many of the larger markets in the North of England, the whole of the market area is covered (*see* Figs. 22 and 23); the expenditure incurred is said to have been more than justified by increased business. Where pens are not covered, trees afford a welcome shade to animals in summer as well as add to the attractiveness of the market, though the roots are liable to damage the market paving. Where animals, such as Irish stores, are detained over a period of days, covered lairage accommodation is desirable (*see* Fig. 21).

(4) Pens should be provided with double-acting gates. Iron divisions between the pens have been found to be the most satisfactory. Feeding troughs should be of concrete, or preferably of glazed brick. Pens should, of course, be paved; the most satisfactory form of paving for cattle markets is concrete, which should be well roughened by grooving and by brushing the surface before it sets. Pens should be drained on the multiple system which permits of draining into the sides of the market roadways.

(5) There should be three or more rings in a market, for dairy cows, fat cattle and sheep respectively (*see* Figs. 24 and 25), and possibly store stock. The ring should be centrally situated, so that a buyer having business in more than one ring may pass quickly from one to the other. Where the rings are centrally situated, one pay-office will serve all the rings and will assist in the rapid and prompt payment of accounts—an important point in auction business. The entrances to and exits from the rings should be just wide enough for the beasts and no more; if too wide, they tend to be packed with buyers and onlookers, which makes it difficult, without unnecessary cruelty, to induce the animals to pass through. Space wasted on the approaches to the rings also means less space for buyers and sellers.

(6) The sale ring should be covered for protection from the weather (*see* Fig. 24). It should be well ventilated—without being cold and draughty—and well lighted, but the building itself need not be too solid, as this makes enlargement or alteration expensive; at the same time, a ring built of galvanised iron or metal work has often bad acoustics. Artificial lighting should be available in the ring on dark days.

(7) Staging and tiered seats to permit of good observation should be provided around the ring and should be adequate to accommodate the buyers attending the larger sales. In some of the Scottish auctions there is seating accommodation for 500 to 700 people, and no buyers are allowed in the ring during selling. In England the presence of a large number of people in the ring is a common occurrence; in one instance, as many as 80 were



FIG. 20.—Covered pig pens at Peterborough.



FIG. 21.—Lairages and dairy cow byres, Cattle Market, Leicester.



FIG. 22.—Sheep pens in private auction market of Messrs. John Swan & Sons, Ltd., Edinburgh.

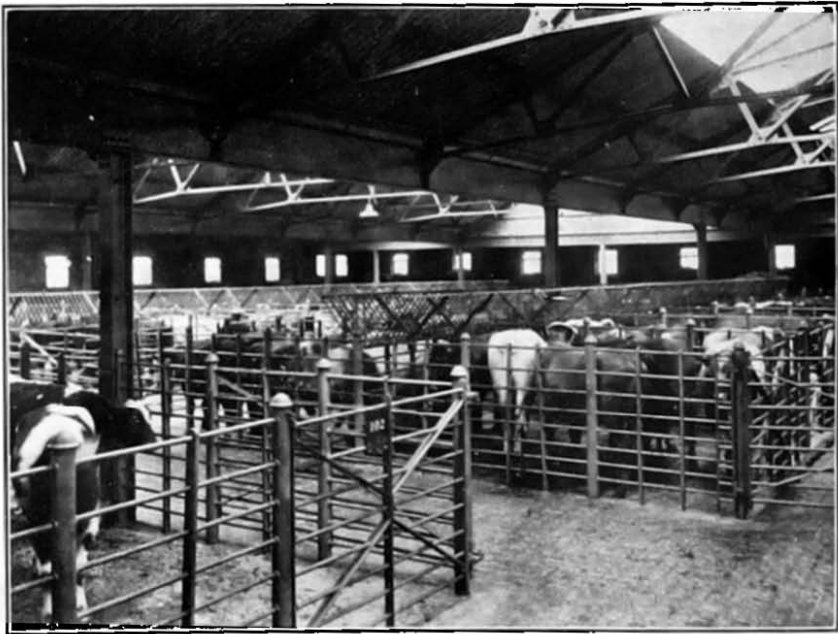


FIG. 23.—Feeding and lairage pens in the same market, Edinburgh.



FIG. 24.—Cattle ring in private auction market, Edinburgh.



FIG. 25.—Sheep ring in private auction market, Perth.

counted in a single ring, and not all were buyers. There are even cases where auctioneers permit dealers to invade the rostrum during sales—a practice which has been the subject of protest by branches of the National Farmers Union. No seats within the ring should be provided in the case of cattle auctions and no one but the drover and the vendor should be allowed within the ring.

(8) The weighbridge should be situated at the entrance to the ring, the dial facing the auctioneer; the board for recording the weights of the animals should be on one side of the exit for stock, which should be opposite the entry. A small point, but one of some importance, is the provision of a reliable clock.

(9) Refreshment rooms, in or near the market, and lavatories should be provided. A settling-room should be provided for buyers. There should also be adequate parking accommodation for vehicles. Pigs and sheep are, in many cases, transported to and from market in motor vans; buyers and sellers use motor cars extensively.

A plan showing the lay-out of a modern livestock auction market is shown in Diagram A on page 56.

(v) Public and Private Control of Auction Marts.

The larger auction marts are mainly situated in markets owned by public authorities, while many of the smaller country marts are in private hands.

In many publicly-owned markets it is difficult to exercise adequate control over the selling arrangements. Apparently, in a number of cases, the authorities regard themselves as under an obligation to permit any auctioneer, who is ready to pay them rent, to sell in the market, with the result that, in some markets, there are too many auctioneers. In one instance noted there are as many as 25. In this connection attention should be drawn to the fact that a byelaw made by the predecessor in title of the Tavistock Urban District Council, under Section 42 of the Markets and Fairs Clauses Act, 1847, to the effect that "no person shall sell or cause to be sold by auction, Dutch auction or public competition . . . without the consent of the superintendent, collector, inspector or surveyor of the markets or his assistant" was held by Mr. Justice Romer in December, 1922, to be invalid as being repugnant to the laws regulating the conditions prevailing in that part of the United Kingdom in which it was sought to be imposed and also, as a byelaw, it had the effect of prohibiting sales by auction in public market in that place. It should, however, be added that the local Act did not require confirmation of the byelaw by the Minister of Health, and that the latter has expressed the opinion that a byelaw, differently framed (in particular, regulating rather than prohibiting auctions, and laying down rules rather than depending on discretion) would not be invalid.

It remains true, nevertheless, that the powers of local authorities to limit the number of auctioneers in public markets

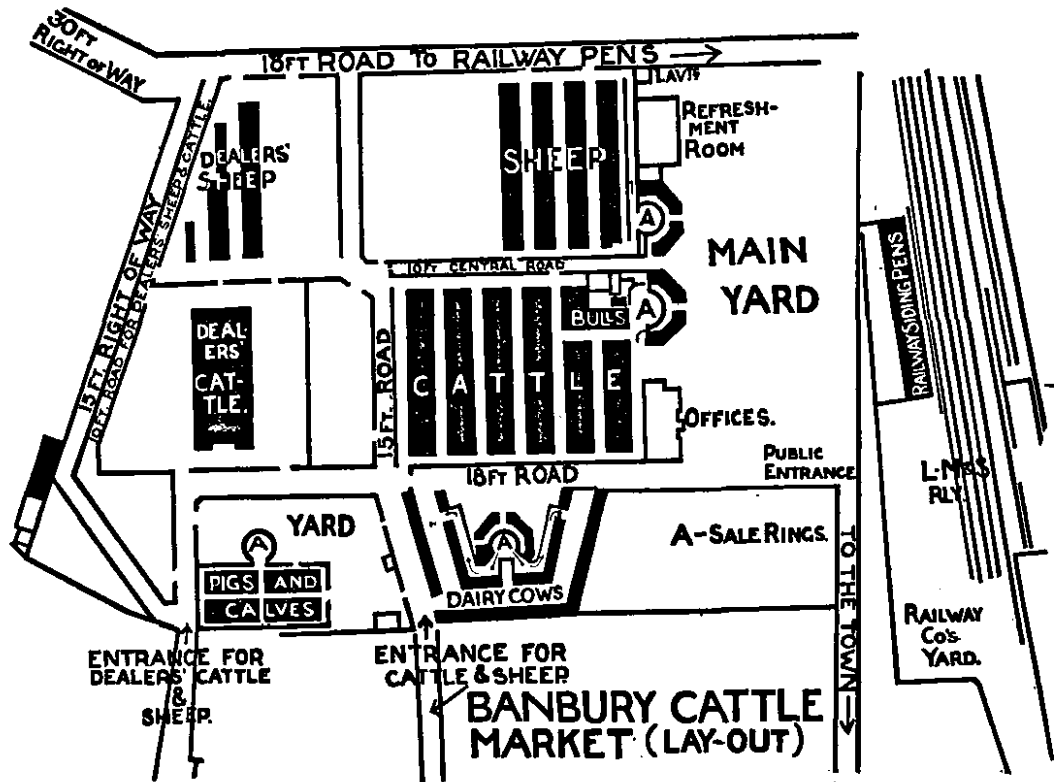


DIAGRAM A.

are restricted, and that they are unable to exercise the control which, in certain cases, might be exercised by a private owner, unless, as for example, at Derby and Bridlington, powers in that regard have been specially conferred by Parliament. At Derby the Markets Committee, or any of its officers, is empowered by the local Act to prevent, at any time, any person exercising the calling of an auctioneer in the Cattle Market. Under the Bridlington Corporation Act, 1904, commodities, except perishables, may not be sold by auction unless with the consent of the Corporation.

Further, local authorities are, in many cases, unable to prevent the clashing of sales of one and the same kind in their markets. There is a good deal to be said for the view that it should be competent for a local authority to intervene, if necessary, for that purpose, and, in some cases, as in Glasgow, this is already achieved by byelaw. In other cases, clashing can only be avoided by agreement, as, for example, when the auctioneers arrange to take turns in holding their sales. In one instance, at least, an arrangement has been made by which one auctioneer handles cattle, another sheep, another pigs. Much can also be done to ensure effective competition by concentrating the sale rings in one part of the market, so that it is easy for buyers to pass from one to the other. In the smaller privately-owned markets, and in farmer-controlled marts, the auction is in the hands of a single firm and no question of clashing arises.

Then again, in publicly-owned markets, there is undue competition from private dealing. Just as a local authority cannot forbid auctions, so it cannot forbid private dealing, and, therefore, dealers can come to market early and make their purchases before the time specified for the auction sale to begin. This practice, if it becomes at all common in a market, makes it difficult for the auctioneer to organise the sale, and may, at any time, cause disappointment to buyers who come from a long distance. In a private market, as a rule, no selling is possible before the advertised time and all buyers are given an equal opportunity.

On the other hand, it is a disadvantage of private ownership that markets that are, in themselves, uneconomic tend to be perpetuated and, hence, that an unnecessary number of markets is likely to be maintained. Auctioneers who own a small market are generally reluctant to give it up, even though it returns no profit or shows an annual loss (*see page 42*). In some instances, it is known that such auctions are only continued to keep out a rival firm.

Then, again, in small privately-owned markets, it sometimes happens that the auctioneer is not in a strong enough position to exercise adequate control. It is said that some markets are manipulated by dealers to such an extent that local farmers no longer send in supplies; there are other markets where a few butchers have established supremacy. In the latter case,

the market probably disappears in due course, but a market which is nursed by a group of dealers may go on indefinitely.

Further, the weaker private markets, as is natural, are often poorly equipped, though poor equipment cannot be regarded as characteristic of private ownership, since some of the best-equipped markets for their size are in private hands. This is especially true of the North of England. In this connection, it has been suggested that Charters have a restrictive effect on the efforts of local authorities to improve public markets, and there can be no doubt that some local authorities have done less to develop and improve the markets under their charge than an average firm of auctioneers would have done in similar circumstances. The desire for increased business would, normally, be sufficient inducement to any competent auctioneer to see that his market has the necessary facilities.

It is a noticeable fact that the great majority of the markets in Scotland and the North of England, where, in general, auctions are more efficiently conducted than in the South, are privately owned. Hence, it has been urged by some that it would be a good thing if many of the public markets in the producing areas were similarly under private control. There is no suggestion that any change could or should be made in the ownership of the large publicly-owned markets in consuming centres, but it is contended that the smaller local authorities are often indifferent to the efficient administration of markets while, at the same time, private firms are unable to step in and effect the desired improvement.

It should be noted that local authorities owning markets under the general law cannot lease them without the consent of the Minister of Health.

(vi) Co-ordination.

There are four parties mainly concerned with livestock markets, namely, farmers, auctioneers, buyers and market owners, and there is reason to think that the more far-seeing leaders of each class would be willing to examine the livestock markets in their own area to see whether economies could be effected by reducing the numbers of these markets and strengthening the larger among them. Farmers stand to gain most, and since any reorganisation would be useless and even harmful unless it were at least as convenient to farmers as the present system, the local branches of the National Farmers Union would seem to be the bodies from which the initiative should come. It is obvious, however, that other interests would have to be brought into consultation at an early stage, which suggests that it might be of advantage if market committees were set up voluntarily in the producing areas by the interests concerned to discuss the problems of livestock marketing arising in their particular districts.

The idea of viewing a producing area as a marketing unit is comparatively novel, and even if some agreement could be

reached as to the best possible arrangement of markets for a county, the plan decided on could hardly be carried into effect as a single step. Changes would almost certainly have to take place gradually, and probably as a result of careful enquiry and practical experiment in one or two particular areas.

This, however, leads automatically to a wider issue. In a city there is a marketing committee of the Corporation, which superintends, regulates and improves the city markets. But there is at present no regional body which functions in the same way for the rural markets of all kinds in a county area. It has, therefore, been suggested that a market committee of the county council should be formed in each county and charged with this duty, or alternatively, that regional markets committees, such as those suggested above, should be set up for the purpose. Such bodies would, it is felt, not only lead to co-operation between the interests concerned in raising the standard of markets and marketing methods, but they would be in a better and stronger position than market owners, as individuals, to face such problems as the elimination of small, economically and financially unsound markets, the restrictions, if any, caused by market Charters, the multiplication of auctioneers in certain markets, the avoidance of unnecessary clashing of market days, the elimination, as far as possible, of the unnecessary haulage and handling of both produce and livestock, the organisation of market trains and motor transport for livestock and the planning of new markets.

A difficulty in regard to this suggestion is that the control which such committees could exercise would, in present circumstances, be limited by the market rights of local authorities and other market owners. As to how far improvements could be achieved by local influence without interfering with existing market rights and without the aid of statutory powers are matters which would call for further consideration.

(vii) Possibilities of Country Slaughtering.

Reference has been made to the fact that the practice of consigning fat stock to a public abattoir for sale on commission on a dead-weight basis is reported to be on the increase in many places; as the dead-meat markets in large towns are growing in importance, it is possible that there will be a trend in this direction in future.

The slaughterhouses which market the farmers' stock in this way are nearly always situated in consuming centres. From time to time attempts have been made to establish slaughterhouses in producing areas, but the principal difficulty is that of supply. A large slaughterhouse cannot be operated economically unless its turnover is large, which is, of course, contingent on the suitable fat cattle in the area of supply being sent to the abattoir. The number of producing areas in England and Wales which would be suitable for the introduction of such a system is, in any event, limited. Its main advantage lies in saving the loss in

weight and deterioration which livestock sustain when moved from market to market, or when railed long distances on the hoof and in the lower railway rates on dead-meat than on live-stock. It is, therefore, applicable to what may be termed exporting areas, *i.e.*, areas that regularly consign to distant markets.

Slaughtering for consignment to distant markets is, however, a complicated business. The edible by-products have to be used immediately, but their market is in the consuming centres, and if offals have to be transported to any distance, losses may be considerable. Then again, unless the slaughterhouse is large, the inedible by-products cannot be utilised to full advantage. There is the further point that, if the market is poor, livestock can always be returned to the farm or railed to another market, but meat, if to be sold fresh, must be disposed of immediately. Finally, meat quickly loses its "bloom," and, if railed long distances, may compare unfavourably in appearance, though not in quality, with meat freshly killed at the point of consumption.

That these difficulties are not insuperable is proved by the fact that the highest-priced meat sold in Smithfield Market, London, is marketed in this way. This is beef from the Aberdeen district, which is, as a rule, sold in the London market 36 hours after dispatch. One of the features of this trade is that, on the whole, it is a trade in high-class beef; though, on occasion, the less highly-priced joints are also marketed in the same way. The trade is of long standing, and appears to continue partly because the senders have adopted what is essentially the principle of an export trade and, in general, limit railings to supplies of prime quality, partly because of the existence of a large surplus over local requirements, and partly because of a well-organised railway service. Of greater importance is the fact that the Smithfield wholesale carcase butcher prefers to handle meat killed at the point of production rather than to receive cattle on the hoof. This preference is not, in fact, confined to Aberdeen, but extends to supplies landed at Birkenhead and elsewhere. There is now a tendency for small supplies of English cattle to be dealt with in this way in certain parts of England.

CHAPTER VIII: ABATTOIRS, COLD STORES, HIDE AND SKIN MARKETS.

(i) Abattoirs.

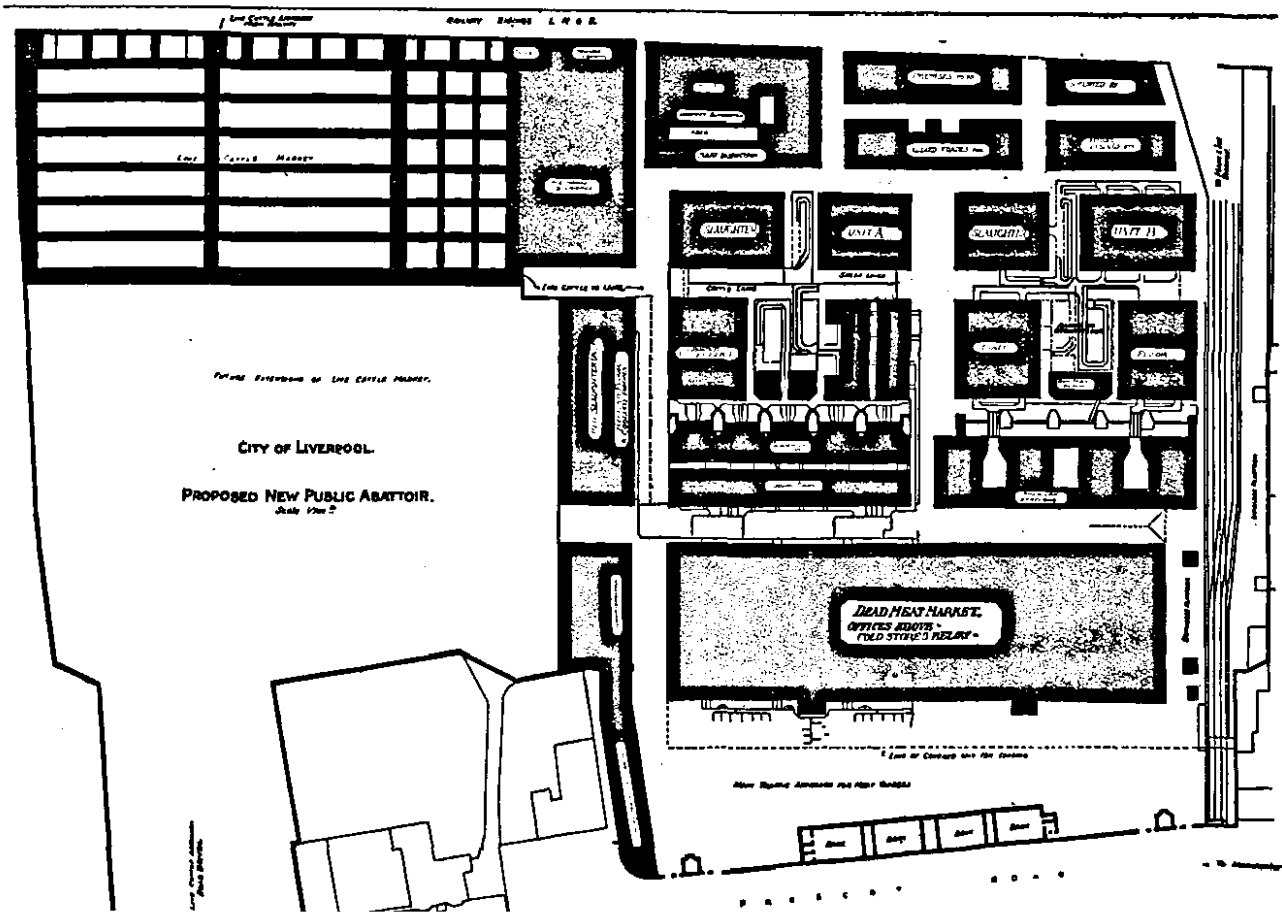
By reason of Section 169 (second paragraph) of the Public Health Act, 1875, which incorporates provisions from the Towns Improvement Clauses Act, 1847, and is extended to all rural districts by the Rural District Councils (Slaughterhouses) Order, 1924, all private slaughterhouses have to be either licensed or registered and are open to inspection by local authorities, who can make byelaws for the regulation of such slaughterhouses. Section 169 (first paragraph) of the Act of 1875 (which has been extended to all rural districts by the Order of 1924) empowers local authorities to provide public slaughterhouses and to make byelaws in regard to them.

Slaughtering is carried out on farms to a limited extent, but, more usually, it is carried out at the small private slaughterhouses of butchers and dealers. These are often situated a long distance from the livestock market and in the centre of densely-populated districts in close touch with private dwellings. They often present undesirable features from a sanitary standpoint and, in any case, their location frequently necessitates the beasts being driven from the market through the streets of the town—a procedure which may be both laborious and dangerous. There are approximately 20,000 private slaughterhouses in England and Wales. In a number of the larger consuming centres, private slaughterhouses are declining in numbers, their places being taken by public slaughterhouses owned and controlled by the local authorities and erected where possible, immediately adjacent to the cattle and meat market (*see* Diagram B on page 62). There are about 100 public abattoirs in England and Wales. The improvement in the finished article, which results from the better hygienic conditions prevailing in a well-managed and adequately equipped public slaughterhouse, the economies made possible by the more efficient utilisation of by-products, the elimination of cruelty, and the ease of supervision are among the strongest arguments in favour of the abolition of small slaughterhouses.

The following quotation from the Report* of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Humane Slaughtering of Animals is relevant :—

“ However humane and scientific in theory may be the methods of slaughter, it is inevitable that abuses and cruelty may result in practice, unless there is a proper system of official supervision. This can only be satisfactorily effected in public abattoirs, which it is hoped

* Cmd. 2150. 1904.



will eventually become the only legal places of slaughter ; but the Committee is of the opinion that much might be done in the meantime by local urban and rural authorities, if they took full advantage of the power entrusted to them under the existing laws."

The Linlithgow Committee* made the following recommendations with regard to slaughterhouses :—

" The public interest demands a considerable extension of the system of public abattoirs and the improvement of those already in existence and, finally, that these facilities should be made available to users at the minimum cost. Every urban authority should take advantage of its existing powers and make suitable byelaws for the regulation and inspection of private slaughterhouses and should consider the advisability of providing a public abattoir. Urban authorities in Scotland have power to abolish private slaughterhouses when public accommodation is available. Similar powers of supersession should be given to local authorities in England and Wales subject to adequate compensation being paid where justifiable."

There are, of course, arguments on the other side. Many retail butchers complain that, for various reasons, they find slaughtering in public abattoirs both troublesome and inconvenient, and some prefer to relinquish slaughtering altogether and to buy their dead meat from the wholesale trade rather than to use the public abattoirs. This is apt to lead to increased demand by butchers for imported meat at the expense of home-produced. Certainly, in any town where slaughtering is, as far as possible, concentrated in a public abattoir, the local authority is under a special obligation to provide accommodation that is not only adequate but up to date in equipment and design. In many public abattoirs, the available space is inadequate (which may place the smaller butcher at a disadvantage compared with the large wholesaler), and the facilities provided for hanging and cooling carcasses and for treating edible and inedible offals are insufficient and antiquated.

It is interesting to note that, at the present time, and as a result of the attention which has been given to the methods of slaughtering in abattoirs, a " model " abattoir (see Diagram C on page 64) is being erected at Letchworth to demonstrate humane slaughtering and the hygienic treatment of meat. The building, in addition to the usual slaughter hall, cooling hall, &c., will also include a lecture theatre where technical instruction is to be given.

It may be added that 11 farmers' co-operative slaughterhouses are operating at the present time. Their combined output is, however, relatively small.†

* Third Interim Report. Cmd. 1927. 1923.

† See Economic Series No. 1, pp. 111-121.

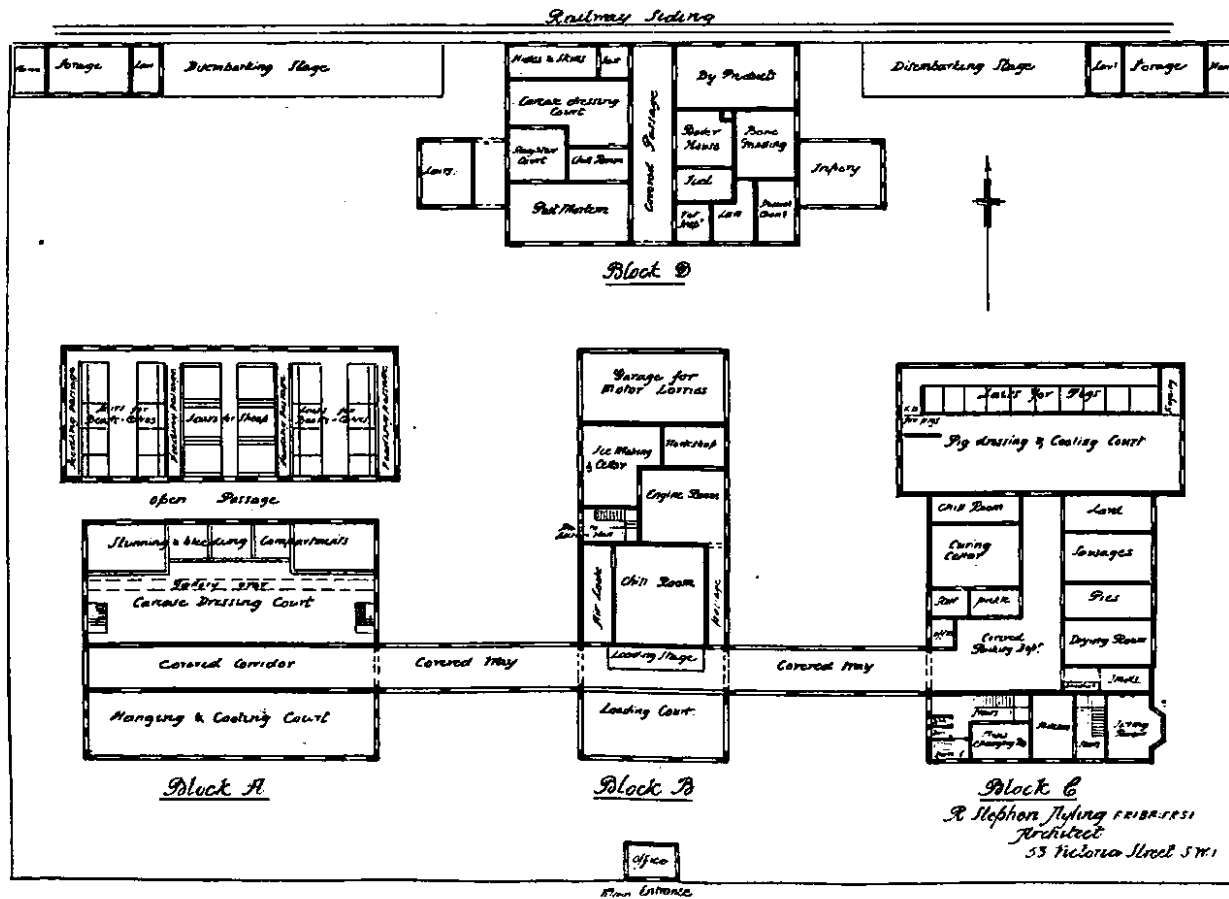


DIAGRAM C.—Plan of Ground Floor for Design for Public Abattoir, Bacon Factory, and technical Training Centre suitable for a Town with about 50,000 Inhabitants. (From the model shown at the British Empire Exhibition)

(ii) Cold Storage Accommodation.

The erection of cold storage accommodation by municipal authorities or by private enterprise, as an adjunct to abattoirs and markets, has effected a radical change in the markets of some of the largest towns, more especially in connection with the distribution of overseas produce. As is the case with abattoirs the provision of cold stores involves a considerable outlay of capital and it is for the municipal authorities to decide whether such outlay would be justified, on their part, in the particular market under their control, having regard to the fact that municipal cold stores necessarily compete, in some degree, with privately-owned stores that are run as specialist enterprises and, further, that in the country generally, the amount of cold storage accommodation exceeds actual requirements. The important point in most large towns is, however, whether existing cold stores are erected in the right place from a market standpoint.

The desirability of providing cold stores has recently been recognised by Parliament. Under the Public Health Act, 1925, local authorities, which have provided markets or public slaughterhouses, may, under certain conditions, erect cold stores, without promoting a special Bill for that purpose. The Act does not permit the municipal sale of ice, unless special powers already exist.

In some cases, where cold storage accommodation is provided by local authorities, it is run at a financial loss. The cost of cold storage facilities should not, however, be considered apart from the market which they serve. They save large quantities of food stuffs from deterioration and they stabilise market conditions by enabling stocks of perishable commodities to be held over for a period until supplies are short; they are a factor in attracting market business. In fact, the benefit accruing to the market and to the community from efficient cold storage accommodation cannot readily be computed in terms of money.

(iii) Hide and Skin Markets.

Properly speaking there are no hide and skin markets in this country, if by "market" is meant one established either by Charter, prescription or Act of Parliament. The trade in home-produced hides and skins is in the hands of a number of private firms, whose premises may be adjacent to a livestock market or large slaughterhouse. In this sense, there are about 130 hide and skin markets representing, in the aggregate, a trade of roughly £5,000,000 per annum.

The premises usually consist of ordinary warehouse accommodation covering a large floor space. In some cases, the hides are bought outright from butchers and others; in other cases, particularly in what are known as butchers' markets, the whole trade is done on commission.

Butchers always look upon hides as being one of the perquisites included with entrails, &c. No separate allowance is made by

butchers to farmers for hides, either when animals are bought by auction or on a dead-weight basis, although the value is usually taken into account by the two parties. It is not generally realised by farmers that the tanner pays about £2 for a hide in good condition from an average bullock. From the butchers the hides are collected, in the case of large towns, daily and in the case of outlying districts perhaps every three days, and dispatched to the nearest hide and skin market; here they are weighed and, after an allowance has been deducted for dirt, &c., adhering to the hide, packed according to weight (except in the case of sheep skins, which are graded according to size), graded and laid in lots on the floor. After examination, they are sold, usually, in an adjoining room, to a limited clientele of hide buyers who forward them to the orders of various tanners; the selling is sometimes by auction and sometimes by private treaty. The various grades of weight are usually (i) 49 lb. and under, (ii) 50-59 lbs., (iii) 60-69 lb., (iv) 70-79 lb., (v) 80-89 lb., (vi) 90 lb. and upwards. At the present time, the heavier the hide, the higher price per lb. it commands. Hides are generally classed in two qualities, namely, "firsts" and "seconds"; third quality are "casual" hides. It is interesting to note that, apart from salting the hides—a precaution undertaken especially in hot weather or in order to keep them in condition—no processing is attempted until the hides and skins arrive at the tannery. Sheep skins are first dispatched to "fellmongers," whose business it is to remove the wool and forward the skin (then known as the "pelt") to the tanners; the hair on bullock hides, &c., is usually removed at the tannery.

Some few years ago the Hide, Leather and Allied Trades Improvement Society (consisting of the hide market and the tanners buying hides) was founded. At intervals an inspector from the Society is sent round to inspect the hides at the Society's registered markets with a view to maintaining a standard of classification and weighing. An inspection charge of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hide is paid by the purchaser. The Society's registered markets include practically all the hide and skin markets in the country.

The conditions under which hides, fats, &c., are sold in this country were considered by the Standing Committee on Trusts.* It is sufficient, therefore, to say that the price of hides is governed by world prices, though there are certain markets, such as Messrs. Markendale's at Manchester, which are looked upon as "leaders" in price determination. Best prices are realised in July to September, while lower prices rule from December to April; in both cases, the demand from the leather manufacturers is, of course, the governing factor.

It has been stated on good authority that the value of the hides and skins produced in this country could be very substantially increased if (1) flaying by butchers were improved, (2) damage by the warble fly were eliminated by dressing, and (3) hides were put into a more marketable condition by butchers. Much could be

* Cmd. 1057, 1920.

done for the improvement of English hides if farmers and dealers could be convinced that it would be to their financial advantage to market good quality hides by the more general eradication of "warbles." At present the payment they receive, indirectly, for hides is negligible compared with the ultimate price realised, and, apart from the health of their animals, it does not seem to them to matter greatly whether "warbles" are present or not, or whether the hides are marketed in good condition or to the best advantage.

Probably, the best solution of the difficulty lies in the concentration of slaughtering. This would assist in raising the standard of the trade and would lead to better organisation. It would also ensure that the hides and skins are marketed in the condition which commands the highest prices.

Raw fats are sold either direct to tallow melters, or to collectors who sell to tallow melters, or through auctions held usually by the "hide markets." In the North and Midlands fat is generally bought for textile purposes and is obtained through the "hide markets," generally by private treaty, the buyers sometimes attending themselves and sometimes sending their orders to the same professional buyers who buy the hides for the tanners.

CHAPTER IX : CONCLUSION.

Efficient markets are important not only for the functions which they perform, but for the reactions which they have on agriculture. There are instances where it is claimed that the mere provision of market facilities has greatly stimulated local production. The wholesale fruit and vegetable auctions in the West Midlands may be quoted as an example ; at Swansea, again, where the Corporation cleared a space for local growers in the retail market, a market-gardening industry is in course of development in the immediate neighbourhood. In all cases, the establishment of new wholesale markets has helped the growth of the wholesale trade.

Of greater importance, perhaps, is the stimulus which efficient markets give to what may be termed "quality-production"; in the markets in producing areas, the product of one farm competes with that of another ; in the markets in consuming centres, home produce, in detail and in the mass, meets the competition of supplies from abroad. Further, good markets have great educative value in enabling producers to appreciate the advantage of a reputation for quality and reliability and in informing them of market requirements.

In many livestock markets there is, of course, no external competition from imported animals, though the prices paid for prime stock in good markets have some effect in levelling up quality. There is, however, the difficulty that the districts which produce stores for the grazing and feeding districts are usually at a considerable distance from the latter—too far away, in many cases, to react properly to variations in the prices realised for varying qualities in the fat-stock market. Further, in the breeding areas, young stores are mainly sold through dealers who do not, as a rule, make sufficient differences in their price for differences in quality, or they may be sold through small auctions which do not reflect true differences in value. So it comes about that there is often no very marked incentive to produce good stores, which probably goes some way to explain the quantity of second and third grade animals to be seen in most fat-stock markets. In Scotland, where a greater proportion of the store stock passes through well-conducted auction marts, there is greater price differentiation.

Perhaps the most vital service rendered by a good market and good market practice is the creation of confidence, which is the foundation of trade. For confidence, in its turn, promotes enterprise, and successful enterprise increases production. Conversely, the effect of an inefficient market, or of a market where supplies are irregular and prices fluctuate violently, may be to destroy confidence, and hence to limit production. This is a general statement which is borne out by the facts of agriculture in this country. To take one instance only, the price-fixing agreement between farmers and

distributors in regard to fluid milk has introduced a stabilising element into the trade. The farmer has known, within a little, what returns he can look for. In the case of commodities which pass through markets and do not readily lend themselves to this method of price stabilisation, the question very often resolves itself into one of ensuring such conditions as will give the farmer confidence that his produce or stock is being sold to the best advantage. This confidence does not always exist at the present time, and if both sellers and buyers realised how injurious are all conditions which hinder its establishment a concerted effort to improve markets and market practices might be anticipated.

Nowhere is the effect of lack of confidence seen more clearly than in the smaller livestock auctions. It requires a considerable knowledge of such auctions to appreciate the finessing which goes on occasionally. In a market of this kind the farmer always dreads a sudden and violent fall in price, and to guard against it puts a reserve, it may be, on every animal he shows. If he is a timid seller, he may put an animal through the sale ring at three or four successive auctions, buying it in on each occasion, with loss of time and money. It is said that some farmers are so well-known to follow this practice at certain auctions that buyers walk away when their beasts are shown. On the other hand, if there is a "ring" among the buyers so that the farmer cannot get a bid which represents the true value of his animals, it can only be that buyers, for their part, have failed to recognise that, in destroying confidence by not paying a fair price, they must, in the long run, handicap themselves in so far as they damage the auction and discourage the producer. Both parties are acting in what they conceive to be their best interests, but, in fact, are prejudicing their own livelihood. The proper remedy in this case is larger auctions, in which farmers will, from experience, acquire more confidence. It would be a revelation to farmers who sell in these small auctions to pay a visit to the large Scottish markets, such as those at Perth, Lanark or Edinburgh, where the advantages of broader competition can be seen.

It follows that any measures that can be suggested for enhancing the efficiency of markets generally and for improving market conditions call for careful consideration. A number of such suggestions have been made in the course of this Report.

The basic consideration which is sometimes lost sight of is that a Charter or Act conferring a market franchise, and with it a monopoly of market rights within a radius of 6½ miles, also carries a corresponding obligation to provide proper facilities. Among assembly markets in producing areas, distributive markets in consuming centres and among livestock markets, there is need for improved facilities in many instances. In a number of large towns, the erection of new wholesale markets or the enlargement of existing markets is long overdue to cope, not only with the requirements of large and growing populations, but with the development of motor transport. From views expressed by

competent authorities, some indication is given, in pages 34 to 36 and 53 to 55, of the features to be desired in well-planned and well-conducted markets.

In view of the large number of public markets in England and Wales, the question of the control exercisable by local authorities over the markets within their jurisdiction is one of considerable importance, and there is much to be said for the view that they should be freed from out-of-date and seemingly useless restrictions in the administration of their markets. For example, in public markets where auction sales are held, it seems anomalous that unless special provision is made by local Act, public authorities are unable to restrict the number of auctioneers selling in their markets or to prevent the same classes of stock being sold at the same time in more than one place. In privately-owned markets these difficulties of control do not, of course, arise.

In regard to livestock markets generally, investigation shows that their efficiency varies widely in different parts of the country, the Northern markets on the whole being better than those in the South. The main weakness of the system in England is the unnecessary number of small separate auctions, a weakness which would, no doubt, be even worse than it is but for the protection afforded by the franchise system. It leads to a number of evils, which defeat the object of an auction and, if persisted in, their own object; such are the formation of "rings," repeated offering of stock through the seller's lack of confidence in an auction, running up of stock by owners and, in general, division of buyers and lack of competition. It also leads to waste through stock being moved repeatedly from one small auction to another.

The desirability of amalgamating the smaller auctions applies, however, not only to livestock markets, but to others, such as egg auctions, poultry auctions and wool auctions. The suggestion has been made (pages 58, 59) that a possible way of co-ordinating markets, of effecting the desired concentration and of dealing with other problems which raise difficulties for the individual market owner, would be through area-committees representative of all interests concerned.

It is, of course, desirable that market authorities should administer their own markets with as little interference as possible, but experience shows that some authorities are not sufficiently alive to the importance of keeping their markets reasonably up to date. Local authorities in large towns naturally tend to look on markets from the point of view of their constituents, the consumers, and the interpretation of their responsibilities is a matter for local decision. But in holding franchises, all market authorities have also a responsibility towards producers, both neighbouring and distant, who send supplies to the markets. In short, there are considerations affecting markets in their relation, on the one hand, to the whole agricultural industry and, on the other hand, to food distribution which are of national scope and importance. There would, therefore, seem to be a reasonable case for the greater exercise of central authority in regard to

market problems of more than local significance, including the economic development of markets generally.

There is a tendency in some quarters to think that because markets are institutions of great antiquity and the rights under which many of them are held go back to the Middle Ages, they do not fit in with modern business and have little to offer to modern trade. Nothing could be further from the truth. This survey is concerned with England and Wales, but reference is made in Appendix III to various markets abroad; a wider examination shows that, in all the principal countries, the development of markets to meet modern conditions has been marked. It is so in France and Germany. It is especially true of America. Both the older and the newer countries have, in fact, found that the old device of a market can still play an important part in the sale of agricultural produce, and that expenditure on making such markets efficient is well worth while. The capital already invested in markets in England and Wales runs into many millions of pounds, but fresh capital must be constantly employed, as business increases, to keep the markets up to date and worthy of serving the vast trade in agricultural products—home-produced, Empire and foreign—which is transacted in this country.

Markets and Co-operation Branch,
Economics Division,
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries,
March, 1927.

**APPENDIX I: A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF CERTAIN ACTS
RELATING TO MARKETS AND FAIRS, 1796-1926.**

1796. Hay and Straw Act.
 1834. " " "
 1839. Metropolitan Police Act. (Fairs in Metropolitan Police District.)
 1847. Towns (Improvement) Clauses Act.
 Markets and Fairs Clauses Act.
 1856. Hay and Straw Act.
 1860. Local Taxation Returns Act.
 1868. Metropolitan Police Act. (Fairs in Metropolitan Police District.)
 1871. The Fairs Act.
 1873. " "
 1875. Public Health Act.
 1877. Local Taxation Returns Act.
 1878. Weights and Measures Act.
 1882. Municipal Corporation Act.
 1884. Public Health (Confirmation of Byelaws) Act.
 1887. Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act.
 1888. Local Government Act.
 1890. Public Health (Amendment) Act.
 1891. Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act.
 1893. Sale of Goods Act.
 1894. Diseases of Animals Act.
 1897. Weights and Measures Act.
 1903. Diseases of Animals Act.
 1907. Public Health (Amendment) Act.
 1908. Public Health (Amendment) Act. Under Section 166 Rural
 District Councils given same powers as previously given to other
 Local Authorities.
 1909. Diseases of Animals Act.
 1910. " " "
 1921. Corn Sales Act.
 1922. Diseases of Animals Act.
 1925. " " "
 1925. Public Health Act. Local Authorities given power to erect cold
 stores in connection with markets and to make reasonable
 charge for the use of same, with the consent of the Ministry of
 Health.
 1926. Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act.
 1926. Horticultural Produce (Sales on Commission) Act.

APPENDIX II: CONDITIONS OF SALE IN LIVESTOCK AUCTION MARTS.

(A) Conditions usually found in Livestock Auction Marts.

- (1) Highest bidder to be the purchaser. In the event of dispute, the lot to be put up for sale again or the auctioneer to determine such dispute.
 - (2) Auctioneer to regulate the amount of the bidding and to have the right to reject any bid.
- N.B.—In some markets the amount of advance is laid down for each class of stock.
- (3) No person shall retract any bid.
 - (4) Auctioneer will not recognise the transfer of any lot.
 - (5) Regulations regarding payment in full or of a deposit, if required, by the purchaser. Purchasers paying by cheque to give satisfactory references if required.
 - (6) Purchaser to disclose his full name and address on the fall of the hammer.
 - (7) Lots are sold with all faults and errors of description.
 - (8) Lots to be cleared on the conclusion of the sale or within a stated time thereafter. No lots to be the property of the buyer or to be taken away till paid for. No lot to be removed during the sale.
 - (9) Every lot to be considered as delivered at the fall of the hammer and the declaration of the name of the purchaser to be deemed a full and sufficient acceptance and to bar all questions of delivery.
 - (10) All lots to be at the purchaser's risk at the fall of the hammer.
 - (11) No contra-accounts or set-offs allowed.
 - (12) All lots are to be sold without reserve in the absence of written instructions to the contrary.
 - (13) The auctioneer acts only as an agent between the vendor and the purchaser.
 - (14) The auctioneer not liable for loss of or damage to stock consigned to him or third party damages occasioned by such stock.
 - (15) Right to refuse any animal supposed to be suffering from any disease.
 - (16) Right to withhold payment if a question of warranty arises until such question is settled.
 - (17) If any purchaser fails to comply with the conditions of sale his deposit, if any, to be forfeited and the auctioneers may resell, the defaulter bearing any deficiency which may arise, including all charges, which may be recovered as liquidated damages. The vendor to take any surplus arising from such second sale.
 - (18) No appeal from the auctioneer's decision.
 - (19) Specified time varying from a few hours to four days for claims to be forwarded.

(B) Other Conditions not so generally found.

- (1) Auctioneer will not be responsible for any loss occasioned by fire, accident or otherwise.
- (2) Auctioneer to have a lien on any lot for any sums due to him in respect of current or previous sale.
- (3) Auctioneer, his servants or agents may summarily recover lots taken away in contravention of the conditions of sale.
- (4) Purchaser liable for all costs incurred in the collection or recovery of purchase money.
- (5) Purchaser to be deemed to have inspected the lot he buys.
- (6) Name and address of the sender to be furnished to the purchaser if required.
- (7) Contract of sale to be with the auctioneer.
- (8) Vendor to have the right to withdraw any lot before sale.

It will be seen that most of the above in Class B amplify one or other of the clauses in Class A.

APPENDIX III: NOTES ON MARKETS IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

(A) Dresden Livestock Markets and Slaughterhouses.

The Dresden municipal livestock markets and abattoirs, which were completed in 1910, are situated some three miles outside the city and occupy about 89 acres, of which the cattle markets and kindred buildings cover about 47 acres and the slaughter halls, cold stores, &c., about 42 acres. They are quoted generally on the Continent as the embodiment of all that is best in livestock markets and abattoir construction and design. (See Fig. 26.)

The buildings are of concrete and present a striking appearance. The outside walls are white, with black plinths to a height of about 3 feet. The roofs are constructed of red ribbed-tiles and are of the low, steep, Dutch type, with glazed lights about midway between the eaves and the ridge. The roadways throughout the premises are wide and straight and intersect each other at right angles. Adjacent to all the principal buildings are vacant sites for extensions; there are also other available spaces which are at present planted with trees or formed into ornamental flower gardens. At the main entrance there is a suite of offices for the use of the director and other members of the administrative staff; this accommodation includes a large board room and an exchange with offices and restaurant. A main line of railway extends along the whole of one side of the premises, with special sidings provided with stages for dealing with animals and carcasses, and equipped with apparatus for cleansing and disinfecting wagons and other vehicles. In addition to the covered reception lairages there are separate buildings for marketing live cattle and sheep respectively, and one for calves and pigs. There are also separate slaughter halls for cattle and pigs respectively, and one for calves and sheep, as well as separate slaughter halls for horses, imported animals and diseased animals. Special premises are provided for the treatment of blood, offal, hides and skins and there is also a melting establishment for fat and a destructor plant for dealing with condemned carcasses. Boilers and machinery are provided for supplying steam and hot water to the various departments and for operating the refrigerating machinery which serves the cooling rooms adjacent to each block of slaughter halls and is also employed for the manufacture of ice. Dwelling houses with gardens are provided for employees.

On arrival by rail, the animals are unloaded into pens (see Fig. 27), each of which holds a truck load, whence after weighing, if the senders so wish, at a special weighing house, they enter the covered market lairage where, in accordance with disease regulations, they remain for two or three days before sale in the market halls by private treaty. The cost of feeding is defrayed by the sellers, the amount of food allowed to be given on the day prior to slaughter being fixed by byelaw.

On market day, the animals are driven forward to the market halls where automatic weighing machines, which print weighing slips in triplicate, are provided at a number of convenient points. The market hall for cattle is a building 380 feet long by 190 feet wide and affords accommodation for 1,200 head, the main passages being about 16 feet wide and the side passages about 10 feet wide. A separate market hall, 380 feet long by 240 feet wide, affords accommodation for 3,700 pigs and 3,100 calves, and is sub-divided into 390 pens or stalls. The sheep market is about 160 feet long by 95 feet wide and provides accommodation for 2,200 head. Lairage accommodation is provided in three neighbouring buildings for unsold animals, the first, about 110 feet by 65 feet, is for cattle, the second, 70 feet by 65 feet, is for calves, and the third, containing 36 separate compartments, is for sheep and pigs.

In the construction of the market halls, careful attention has been given to lighting and the most suitable material for floors, and for the fittings and partitions dividing the pens. (See Fig. 28.) The flooring is constructed of specially-finished concrete, or other similar material,

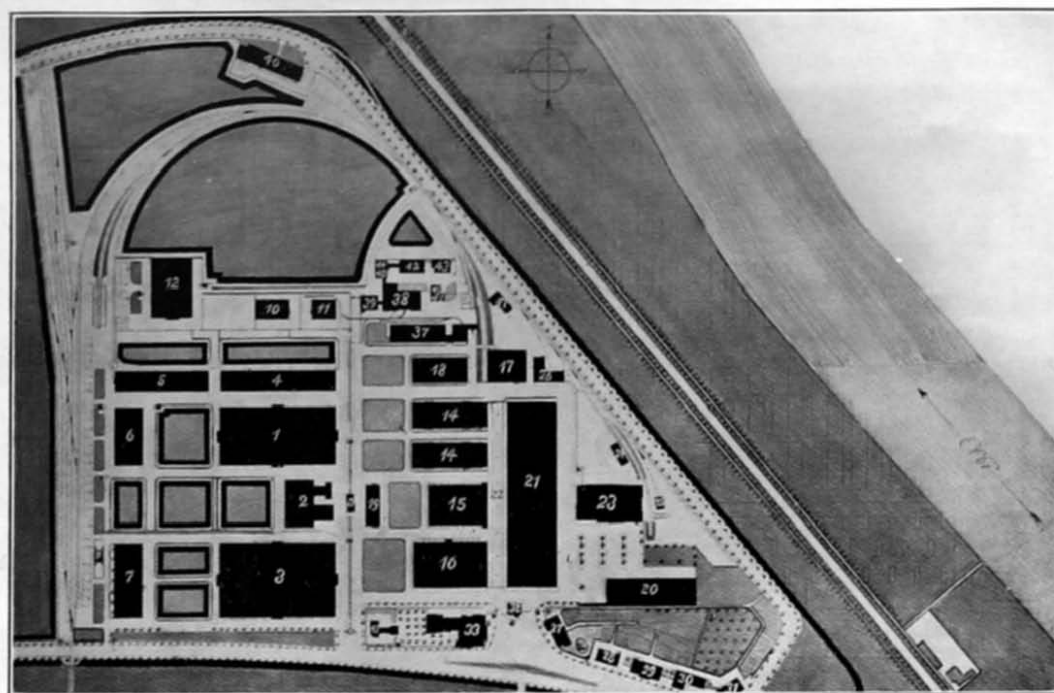


FIG. 26.—Plan of the Municipal Livestock Markets and Slaughterhouses, Dresden, Germany.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Market Hall for Cattle. | 12. Lairs for Foreign Cattle. | 24. Workshop. |
| 2. Market Hall for Sheep, and Market Manager's Office. | 13. Emergency accommodation. | 26. Hide, Skin, and Tallow Stores. |
| 3. Market Hall for Pigs and Calves. | 14. Slaughter Hall for Cattle. | 27. Administrative Department. |
| 4, 5, & 6. Feeding Stalls for Cattle. | 15. Slaughter Hall for Calves and Sheep. | 28. Show Department. |
| 7. Feeding Stalls for Pigs. | 16. Slaughter Hall for Pigs. | 29, 30, & 31. Shops. |
| 8. Gate-keeper's Lodge—Animals entrance. | 17. Manure Shed. | 32. Porter's Lodge. |
| 9. Weighing House. | 18. Lairage for Cattle awaiting slaughter. | 33. Hotel, Exchange, with Cafe and Garden Buffet. |
| 10. Extra Stalls for Cattle. | 19. Lairage for Pigs awaiting slaughter. | 42, 43, & 44. Isolation Lairs, Slaughter House, and Cooling Room. |
| 11. Extra Stalls for Calves and Sheep. | 20. Stalls for Horses. | 46. Tallow, Gut, and Hide Factory. |
| | 21. Cooling House. | |
| | 23. Boiler House and Engine Room. | |

MUNICIPAL LIVESTOCK MARKETS AND SLAUGHTERHOUSES, DRESDEN,
GERMANY.

(Figures 26 to 33 are reproduced from a special supplement to *Der
Industrieban*, "Der Neue Stadtische Vieh und Schlacthof zu Dresden.")



FIG. 27.—Unloading Docks.



FIG. 28.—Market Hall for Pigs.



FIG. 29.—Cattle Slaughter Hall.



FIG. 30.—Waiting Pens for Pigs.

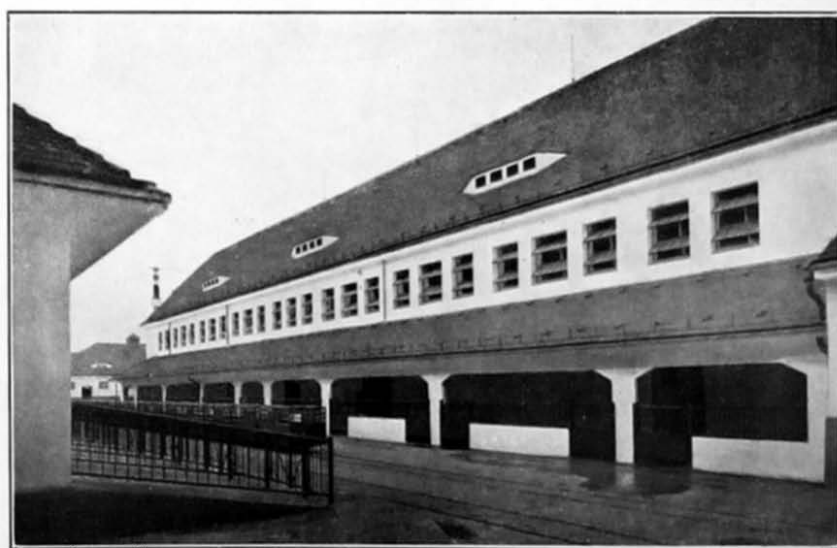


FIG. 31.—Waiting Pens for Sheep and Calves.

which, in addition to being sanitary and easily cleansable, affords a good foothold for the animals. The partitions, surfaces of column casings and ceilings are of ferro-concrete, finished with smooth cement, with a hard white surface. The design of the gates and other equipment for diverting animals to various parts of the building is specially notable, as also is the general lightness of these and other fittings.

The livestock market is held twice a week, on Monday and Thursday; Monday is the more important market, the number of livestock entering being, on the average, from 700 to 1,000 fat cattle, from 2,300 to 2,500 pigs, about 700 calves, and from 600 to 1,000 sheep. At the Thursday market from 500 to 700 pigs and from 500 to 700 calves arrive. From 80 to 90 per cent. of the animals arrive by rail. Cattle are consigned to the market by dealers and sometimes by farmers' associations, who brand the beasts with their mark. Pigs are chiefly sent in by co-operative societies. The animals are all sold on a live-weight basis by commission agents and wholesale butchers, for whom banking facilities are provided at the abattoir.

The official prices for publication are obtained in the following way. For each transaction, a slip showing the seller's name, the name of the purchaser and the kind, price and weight of the animal, is signed by the seller and given to the purchaser, who has then to take it to the fees office, whence it is sent to the market office. There, on each principal market day, an official price is reached on the basis of these slips with the assistance of an honorary committee representative of market users and composed of twelve members—namely, four farmers, four dealers and four butchers. The committee is authorised to examine the books of traders for this purpose.

About 75 per cent. of the animals passing through the market are slaughtered on the premises, mostly on market days. Butchers are responsible for their own slaughtering. A rigid system of carcass inspection by the veterinary officers of the establishment is in operation, in connection with which a scheme of insurance against condemnation of carcasses of cattle and pigs of the age of three months and over is administered by the city authorities; butchers slaughtering animals pay a small premium per head for this purpose.

There are two large slaughter halls for cattle, each being about 235 feet long by 72 feet wide, one, 196 feet long by 152 feet wide, for calves and sheep, and another, 240 feet long by 152 feet wide, for pigs. These are commodious and lofty, with a generous provision for daylight and ventilation. (See Fig. 29.)

The slaughter halls for cattle are floored with stone flags; those for calves, sheep and pigs with specially finished concrete. The walls and columns are faced with glazed bricks or tiles to a height of about 6 feet, and all fittings and appliances are of galvanised or enamelled iron. At intervals of about 12 to 15 feet throughout the slaughter hall for cattle, chains are bolted to the floor for securing animals during slaughter, and near each of these is a crutch, or rest, on which the carcass is supported during the first part of the flaying operation. The carcass is hoisted by hand-power winches on to specially constructed collapsible cambrills and from these transferred to hooks suspended from twin-bar runways, which extend throughout the premises for the transfer of carcasses to the cooling house or elsewhere.

Pigs, calves and sheep intended for slaughter are conveyed in special wagons from the market hall to the slaughter hall, rails being laid for this purpose. The roadways are thus kept much clearer than would be the case if the animals were driven through in the ordinary way. The wagons are unloaded direct into waiting pens (see Figs. 30 and 31), which, in the case of the pig slaughter hall, open into stunning pens, the floors of which are on a level with the top of the scalding tanks. After the animals have been slaughtered and bled in the stunning pens, they are transferred by means of a hinged lever arrangement into the scalding tanks, and thence on to the "scutching" tables. As in the cattle slaughter hall, the

slaughter hall for pigs is fitted throughout with overhead twin-bar runways for the movement of carcasses to the cooling house adjoining.

Extensive provision is made for the refrigeration of carcasses and offals and for the salting and storage, at low temperatures, of bacon, hams, and other meat products. The main building used for this purpose is about 410 feet long by 165 feet wide, the greater proportion of the space being subdivided into lock-up cubicles let to various firms on quarterly or annual tenancies. The floors of this building are laid with cream-coloured tiles, and the roof is of ferro-concrete, finished in smooth white cement. (See Figs. 32 and 33.)

No expense has been spared to achieve this ideal in market and slaughterhouse construction and equipment. The cost of the buildings and site was about £800,000, and they serve a city with a population of about 550,000. The establishment is run on strictly business lines. All expenses, including amortisation, have to be met out of charges; the original capital expenditure is being liquidated over a period of 33 years and will be entirely paid off in 1943.

The director of the markets and abattoirs is a veterinary surgeon and is assisted by 20 other veterinary officers.

(B) Other Markets and Market Arrangements.

The following notes on markets and market arrangements in other countries bring out points of interest that have come to notice, but they are not intended to be comprehensive.

(i) *Continental Markets.*

(a) *Belgium.*—At the wholesale fruit and vegetable market in Brussels (Grande Place), no person may sell unless provided with a certificate showing that he (or she) is a *bona fide* producer (i.e., farmer, market gardener, &c.). Concurrently with this market, a "re-sellers' " market is held on the public streets and boulevards near by.

In Antwerp, there are both public and private markets. The private markets are owned by companies and are held in covered buildings; the public markets, however, are held in the squares or streets and are not administered directly by the city, but by the intervention of a person called the "farmer" (*le fermier*), who collects the fees and is responsible for them to the municipality. The post of "farmer" is awarded each year to the highest bidder; anyone is qualified to enter for the post provided he is of good standing and able to pay the caution money of 500 francs. A candidate does not bid a fixed sum but a percentage of the market dues; he is not allowed to charge more than the fees fixed by the municipality. The markets administered in this manner are concerned mainly with fruit and vegetables; the slaughterhouse and fish market of Antwerp are administered directly by the municipal authorities.

(b) *France.*—The Paris municipal market (Les Halles Centrales) is the principal wholesale fruit and vegetable market in France, and not only supplies Paris, but distributes fruit and vegetables to other French towns. Meat, poultry, fish and, in fact, all kinds of foodstuffs, are also disposed of. The covered-in portion of the market is reserved for commission salesmen. While the wide streets between the market premises and the adjoining streets within a prescribed area are reserved to growers, including dealers who buy and market the produce of the smaller cultivators. The market is the property of the Paris municipality. It is controlled by regulations which prescribe in considerable detail the methods of sale, generally with a view to the protection of the grower who consigns his goods to the market for sale on commission. For example, the commission agents are liable to suspension for "unprofessional conduct" and to prosecution for falsification of sales, prices or charges. The law prohibits them from buying on their own account either inside the market or elsewhere, it being expressly provided that they are to be remunerated solely by commission to be arranged freely between them and their senders. The number of commission agents is limited by the space available; when vacancies arise, admissions are made in accordance with detailed regulations which

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FIG. 32.—Cold Store and Power House.

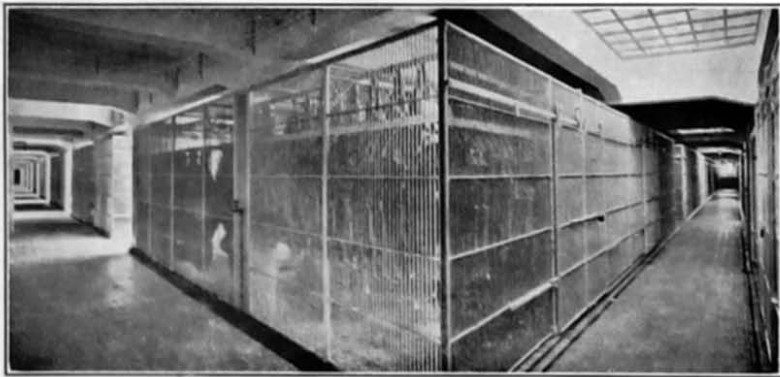


FIG. 33.—Interior of Cold Store.

slaughter hall for pigs is fitted throughout with overhead twin-bar runways for the movement of carcasses to the cooling house adjoining.

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FIG. 32.—Cold Store and Power House.

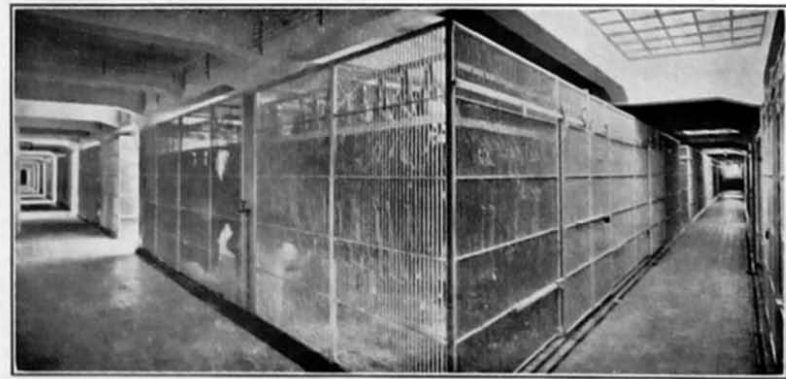


FIG. 33.—Interior of Cold Store.

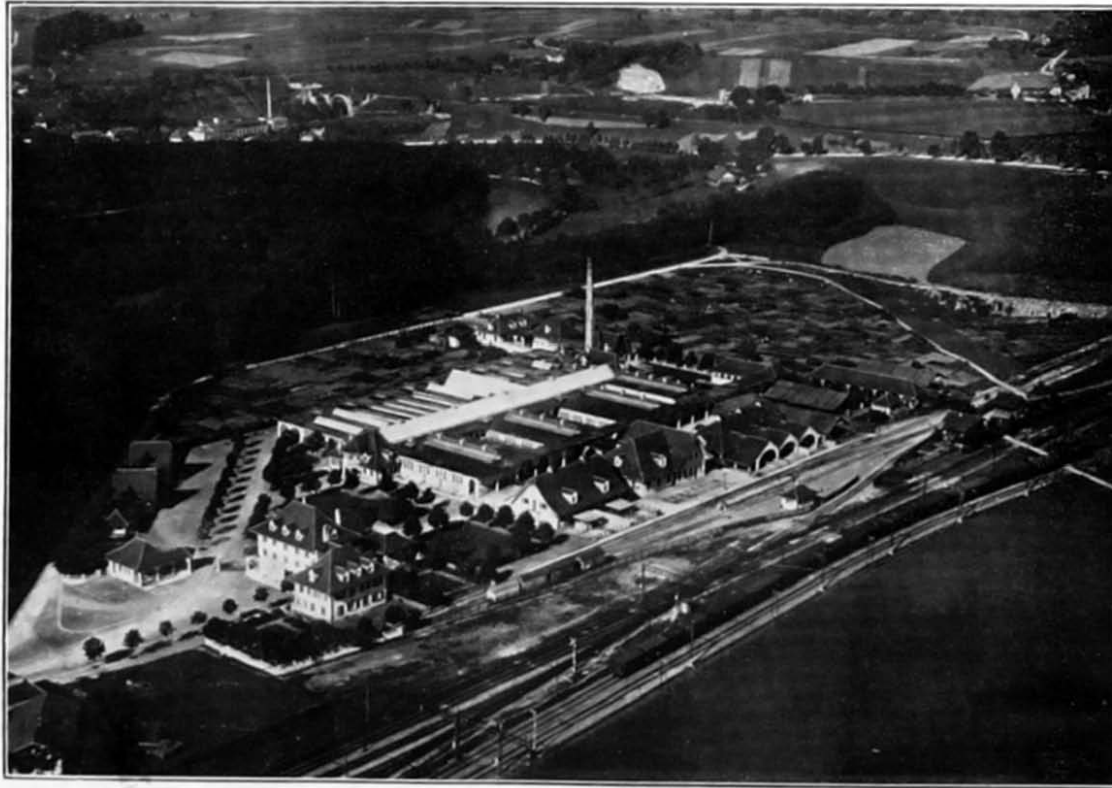


FIG. 34.—Municipal Abattoirs, Berne, Switzerland.

aim at ensuring that only persons of reliability operate in the market. A complete record of each sale has to be kept by the commission agents, giving the date and number of sale, the name of the sender, the description of the goods, the weight or number of packages, the method of sale and price, and the name of the purchaser; in addition, the commission charged and the charges incurred in respect of railway transport, cartage, control, tolls, weighing, telegrams, cheques, unloading, storage, carriage of empties, &c., must be separately specified. These particulars are open to inspection by the grower, who can at any time within three years, demand an investigation by the police of the facts recorded. The agent's books are also open to inspection by the authorities, for the purpose of seeing that the regulations are fulfilled.

A daily record of prices is posted in the market, giving the maximum, minimum and average prices realised for each class of fruit and vegetables, these prices being settled by a committee composed of the market inspector and three commission agents selected by their colleagues. In actual practice, all the commission agents serve in rotation on this committee.

The Prefecture of Police is charged with the inspection and control of the market from the point of view of sanitation, and possesses wide powers in this connection.

(c) *Germany*.—The Berlin abattoirs and markets cover a site of 118 acres and are nearly a mile long. As in most German cities, fat cattle, sheep and pigs intended for the abattoir are not allowed to be driven through the streets, but must be conveyed by rail or by means of suitable vehicles.

At Cologne, permission to hold markets is given by the police authorities, in conjunction with the municipal authorities, and a regulation exists by which all goods to be sold by auction have to be sold by the municipal auctioneer and may not be sold by anyone else. This method increases the strength of the auction by compelling all buyers to compete at one centre.

(d) *Holland*.—At Leewarden Market, the premier market for cattle destined for export alive, inspection by official veterinary officers takes place at the entrance to the market; the cattle are led in, two by two, and inspected by officers stationed on each side of each entrance; decrepit and weak cattle are exposed for sale in a special portion of the market. Five weighing machines are in use at this market, one of which is automatic and prints weighing slips in duplicate; the others require a checker and a clerk.

It has been estimated that 90 per cent. of all fruit and vegetables and early potatoes are sold by auction in Holland. These auctions are maintained by growers organisations, most of which enforce the rule that members shall sell all their produce through the auction. This rule concentrates marketing and strengthens the auction system.

(e) *Switzerland*.—The municipal abattoirs at Berne are the most up-to-date in Switzerland. (See Fig. 34.) The site is on the outskirts of the town, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the business centre. The abattoirs have been designed on the so-called "pavilion" system—that is to say, each building, or group of buildings, is equipped for a different purpose, the traffic in the establishment being uni-directional. The main features are practicability, combined with the humane treatment of the animals and extreme cleanliness. All animals are put over the weighbridge on entering the abattoirs, a large proportion of the cattle being sold by producers on a live-weight basis.

(ii) *South Africa, Canada and the United States.*

(a) *South Africa*.—All the markets in South Africa are municipally owned, but the conduct and management is left almost entirely in the hands of a "market master," who is responsible for the market to the municipal authorities. The main function of a market master is to bring producer and consumer into the closest possible contact. All market

masters, excluding those at East London and Cape Town, act as agents for producers who consign their produce to them, the object being to encourage market agencies under the direct supervision and control of the market masters. In most cases, as in Bloemfontein market, the auctioneering is done by the market master and his assistants; in some cases he also acts as commission agent himself, and, as a rule, owns large warehouses where his client's produce is stored as necessary. At Durban, the market master handles 75 per cent. of the produce consigned to the market, sales being wholesale, in large and small lots, by auction. The commission agents who operate in the markets are supervised by a system of market notes. The commission agent has to fill in the notes and hand them to the market master; the notes must state clearly the quantity of produce sold and the amount realised. Prices are collected by the market master each morning and are sent on by him to headquarters at Pretoria, where they are collated and telegraphed before 3 o'clock each afternoon to post offices in the outlying districts. By this means farmers, even in the most remote districts, are informed, during the course of the evening, of the prices that ruled at the more important markets in the morning.

Under the Public Auctions and Transactions in Livestock and Produce Act, 1925, to "regulate certain transactions in and the sale by auction of livestock and agricultural produce," sale of livestock by auction is to be held in places where the public have free access. The auctioneer must announce the name of the purchaser of livestock, and, after the conclusion of the auction, must make out and deliver to each seller a sales note showing the names of the seller and the purchaser, the number and description of animals sold, the prices at which the animals were sold, the deduction which the auctioneer is permitted to make from the purchase prices and retain for his commission and for all *bona fide* rail, feeding, &c., charges incurred by him in respect of the transaction and the net amount due to the seller. Certain restrictions are imposed on auctioneers in respect of the sale of livestock: thus, it is unlawful for an auctioneer to give, offer or undertake to give any secret or undisclosed rebate in connection with sales, to refuse to accept any bid unless he has good reason to believe (the proof of which shall be upon him) that the bidder is unable to comply with the conditions of sale as to payment, to sell to himself or to any person with whom he is associated in business directly or indirectly, or to pay to the seller or to credit him with a sum less than the amount of the purchase price after deduction of all charges lawfully made under the Act.

(b) *Canada (Alberta)*.—Under the "Stock Yards Act,"* passed in May, 1926, in the province of Alberta, the Minister of Agriculture has power, with the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, to make regulations—

(a) governing the conduct of livestock exchanges and the issue of licences to such exchanges;

(b) prescribing the persons who are to be entitled to do business at stock yards;

(c) providing for the issue of licences to commission merchants and the giving of security by such merchants;

(d) providing for the issue of licences to co-operative associations and prescribing the conditions upon which and the method in which any such association shall be entitled to do business at a stock yard; and the terms upon which any such association shall be entitled to become a member of and exercise the rights of membership in a livestock exchange;

(e) providing for the issue of licences to owners, lessees, occupiers, or operators of stock yards;

* "Stock yards" here means "any area of land used for a public market for purchasing and selling livestock with the buildings, fencing, gates, chutes, weigh scales and other equipment situated thereon or used in conjunction therewith."



FIG. 35.—Community Market, London, Ontario, Canada.



FIG. 36.—Market exterior, Detroit, U.S.A.



FIG. 37.—Market interior, Detroit, U.S.A.

(f) providing for the construction, equipment and inspection of such stock yards ;

(g) approving of byelaws made by exchanges, or prescribing byelaws to be complied with by such exchanges ;

(h) prescribing the fees to be charged in stock yards ;

(i) providing for the appointment of inspectors of livestock, livestock yards and livestock exchanges, and any other officers that may be required to carry out the regulations made under the provisions of this Act ;

(j) prescribing the conditions upon which the operation of stock yards may be begun, or upon the breach of which they may be closed ;

(k) providing for the grading of livestock ;

(l) providing for the inspection, branding and marketing of livestock ;

(m) prescribing the kind or description of livestock which may be offered for sale at stock yards ;

(n) which are calculated to ensure the fair conduct of livestock exchange and co-operative associations or on the part of commission merchants, or owners, lessees, occupiers or operators of stock yards.

(c) *United States.*—In the United States, open retail markets are common. They may be held along the street—a defined length of kerb being set aside by local authority for that purpose—or on a vacant piece of land where farmers congregate in their motor wagons to sell direct to consumers. A Canadian example of this type of market is shown in Fig. 35. Some of the larger cities have large market buildings with wholesale and retail divisions, comprising hundreds of stalls and equipped with cold storages, railway switches, &c. Detroit Market (Detroit has about 1,200,000 inhabitants) may be given as a typical example of an American “farmers’ market.” (See Figs. 36 and 37, and also Diagram D, hown here.) It is situated in an important producing area, and

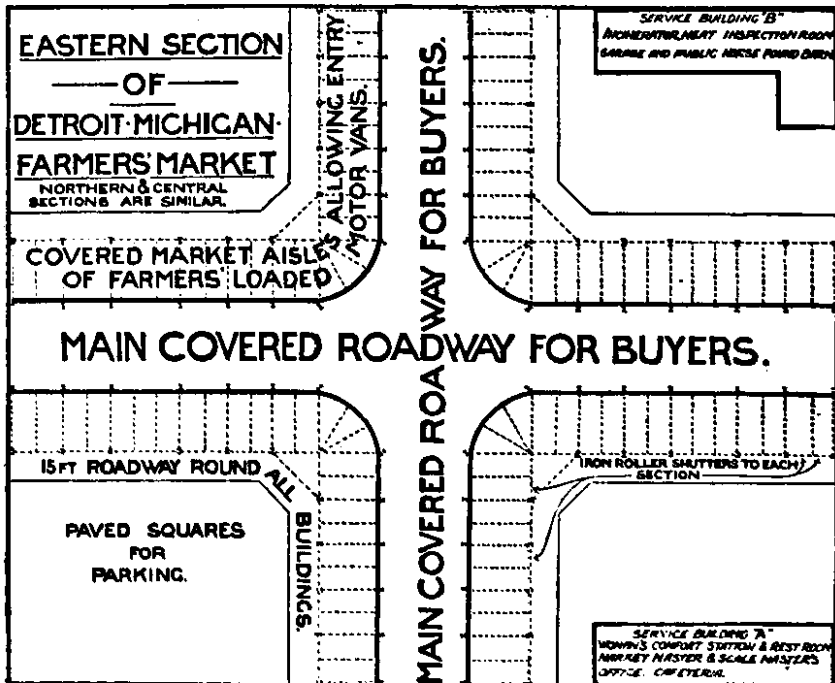


DIAGRAM D.

growers are within easy motor distance. The market occupies 17 acres, of which $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres are covered. In addition, 7 acres are set aside for parking buyers' vehicles (of which more than 1,200 can be accommodated), and for roadways. The market buildings are in the form of a cross, which provides four paved corners for the parking of buyers' vehicles; this encourages the use of the market by retailers. In the newest portions of the market, the building is of concrete, brick and steel, and is well lighted. Rolling steel doors surround the outer edge and completely enclose the market. There are 667 market stalls under cover and 700 market stalls are outside the buildings and used for overflow. Over 800 growers rent stall space by the year. Public comfort rooms are provided, in addition to the usual office and general service buildings.

The system of auction selling has come into prominence in the important centres of population in the United States, more particularly in connection with the sale of goods, such as fruit and vegetables, which are sufficiently well standardised to permit of systematic sampling. Pure-bred breeding stock is practically the only kind of livestock sold by auction in the United States. There are, however, a few fat stock auctions in California and some of the Southern States. An important development is the formation of producers co-operative livestock commission associations in the large central markets; 25 such associations, operating in 20 different markets, handled livestock to the value of nearly £60 million in 1924.