

How the Beef Trust has Poisoned the Peoples' Food

The Beef Trust has for once been seriously disturbed. The representatives of that trust pretended to laugh at the expose made by Upton Sinclair in his book "The Jungle." Mr. Sinclair told a terrible story. President Roosevelt sent J. B. Reynolds and Charles B. Neil to investigate the conditions in Packingtown, and they made such a report that Senator Carter, speaking for the president, made public a statement that if the packers continued to oppose the meat inspection bill pending before congress the reports of Mr. Roosevelt's commissioners would be made public. Under existing law meat designed for use abroad is inspected by the federal government, while meat designed for the American people is uninspected except where inspection is made by state or city authorities. The bill pending before congress provides that all meat shall be inspected under federal authority. This will require a large increase of the inspection force, and additional expense estimated to amount to \$2,000,000 per year. Representatives of the beef trust say that this additional expense should be borne by the government. They say that they do not care about the passage of the measure provided the government foots the bill. Representatives of the stock raisers urge that the expense of inspection be paid by the government on the ground that if the packers are required to pay it they will see to it that the expense really falls upon the cattle raiser or the consumer.

Upton Sinclair has been very active in urging the publication of the report. Mr. Sinclair says that publicity is necessary in order to bring about reform. Some idea of the character of the disclosures made may be obtained from a number of "Trust recipes" published by a New York newspaper. These recipes indicate how—according to recent disclosures—the Beef Trust has piled up enormous profits by unloading upon the American public rotten food stuffs:

TRUST RECIPE FOR VEAL LOAF

Carcasses of unborn calves are used to make veal-loaf.

TRUST RECIPE FOR FRESHENING HAMS

Putrid hams are placed on a working table, and a man with a foot-pump, which works on the principle of a gigantic hypodermic needle, fills them with a chemical which kills the odor.

The demand was generally made by the newspapers that the report concerning diseased meat be made public. It is not possible to print extracts from all the newspapers, but the following sample expressions are fairly representative. The New York American throws a number of sidelights on the expose and calls for the immediate publication of the report to the president.

The New York World says: "Enough has leaked out about the packers' practices to horrify the public. Possibly the whole truth would not be more disturbing. In any case it would clinch the facts and dispose of misleading rumors. The country needs to be disturbed. Half truths will result only in half measures."

The New York Times insists upon publicity, saying that the revolting practices described in Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle" were not so bad as the terrible discoveries made by Messrs. Neil and Reynolds.

The New York Tribune seems somewhat at a loss to understand why there should be any hesitation at Washington about publishing this report, "because," as it says, "publicity has been the subject of a rather loud cry for sometime at Washington." The Tribune says: "The public should be given the facts in matters of this magnitude. It is an issue which deeply concerns every home in the land. The truth, and the whole truth, should be told in this case, as it has been told in other cases intimately touching the rights and welfare of American citizens. But whether we are to have publicity or not, we are encouraged to believe that congress, by providing for periodical inspection of the packing plants of the country, may at least protect the vast body of consumers against unwholesome conditions in these great food centers hereafter. There is an intimation that the suppression of information now in the hands of the government may be promised in order to silence the protests made against the Beveridge amendment. This, we believe, is improbable. Promises of this character, in such circumstances, are not honorable. The government should not engage in barter and bargain with offenders against the law. If the welfare of the American people has been outraged, the government should expose, and penalize in other ways, those guilty of the offense. The truth should not be suppressed; the guilty should not be spared. The government is strong, and we very earnestly hope it is decent enough in every department, to provide for adequate inspection of these plants without making disreputable concessions to those who have offended and outraged the rights of the American people."

The Wall Street Journal prints over its editorial on this subject the headline "Murder." The Journal's editorial follows: "Talk about 'tainted money,' there is no tainted money that smells so rank as money made by the sale of tainted meat. Nothing in the way of muck rake disclosures, nothing in the insurance scandals, the Standard Oil rebates, or the railroad graft, is so hideous as the facts which it is reported a special commission of the government has obtained, regarding the packing and sale of diseased meat by the Beef Trust. Insurance frauds, Standard Oil secret rates, and railroad graft and discriminations, are simply forms of theft. The sale of diseased meat is nothing less than wholesale murder. The Beveridge bill providing for rigid government inspection must, of course, be passed. But is this all that the public is entitled to? The president, while eager for the passage of the Beveridge bill in order to prevent

the continuance of the horrible conditions which have been disclosed, would seem to hesitate about having the facts which have come to him spread upon the public records. No wonder that he hesitates if they are as bad as the unofficial statements indicate. But the legislation must be accompanied by the report upon which it is based. Nothing will serve better to correct this terrific evil which affects the health and lives of millions of people than publicity, however disgusting and terrifying the facts may be. The offending packers are entitled to no mercy. Make them pay the cost of the government inspection."

The Chicago Tribune touches the case rather diplomatically, but warms up to the subject sufficiently to say: "The mischief has been already done. Public confidence in the sanitary arrangements of Packingtown has been undermined by unofficial publicity. The public is distrustful, but not wholly convinced that only facts have been told. Apparently the best thing for all concerned is that the truth shall be made known, and if actual evils shall be found to exist that adequate measures be taken to remedy them."

The Sioux City Journal says: "In these circumstances it is clear that all trustworthy information on the subject should be given out. We want full knowledge of the actual conditions first, and after that, if it is seen that there are evils to be corrected, effective remedies should be provided. Every one recognizes that tremendous interests are involved and every one should recognize also that it is futile to play the ostrich act."

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat says: "Publicity of the widest possible scope regarding these meat revelations is demanded for several reasons. The people want to know the facts, and they want to know them straight. They do not want to get them through the medium of sensational novels or partisan tracts or pamphlets, or through the written or verbal statements of any irresponsible or reckless persons."

The Milwaukee Sentinel says: "As the Chicago Tribune's staff correspondent summarizes the case, President Roosevelt is using the report of the federal investigation of the house conditions as a club to force the passage of the Beveridge bill for stringent government regulation through inspection of the industry. Congress is told and the packers are told that unless the legislation is enacted and consented to promptly there will be an 'expose.' But is not the public entitled to this 'expose' in any case—to learn on the authority of the government just how much or how little of truth there is in the hideous charges made by Upton Sinclair and by the more temperate but generally accusatory articles by specialist writers on Packingtown conditions in a recent issue of World's Work? The country is greatly roused over this matter. It is stated that the packers want the report suppressed because they dread the publicity. But that is hardly credible. The suppression of the report, by breeding all sorts of horrible and exaggerated inferences as to its contents, would be worse for the packers than publication. People would naturally jump at the conclusion that the government investigation even more than bore out the catalogue of horrors in Sinclair's revolting book. Imagination, spurred by Sinclair's Zolaesque tale of moral and physical putrefaction, would play freely on a report seemingly too shocking to be published. If the packers are wise, and are sincere in their protestations that charges afloat against them are sensational and ill-founded, they should demand publication—not leave the public to infer the worst from suppression with their concurrence. There is reason to believe that this government report, while showing the need of stricter inspection, indicates that Packingtown conditions are far better than Sinclair painted them. But the truth is wanted, and the people have a right to be shown."

"IN ITS WORST FORM"

According to the Wall Street Journal, "there are 104 capitalists in New York, the number of whose directorships aggregates 2,857. This is an average of more than twenty-seven for each man. Not one in the list holds less than ten directorships, while thirty-three hold over thirty, the highest number for any one man being 106. This is the record for 1906."

The Journal declares that this represents "dummy directorship in its most dangerous form."

TRUST RECIPE FOR SAUSAGE

One of the steady sources of supply of sausage meat comes from the meats which have been shipped to branch houses. If sales are slow it remains until mouldy, slimy and unfit to be sold in the original form and then is sent back to the packing-house to be converted into sausage.

TRUST RECIPE FOR NO. 1 LARD

Hogs are more affected with cholera than any other disease, but unless very bad are tanked for lard. The heads also, which have been condemned as tuberculous, are almost invariably tanked for lard.

TRUST RECIPE FOR SARDINE OIL

Hogs that have died from cholera or other causes are transformed into "un-rendered hogs' grease," which is used all over the world for a variety of purposes. Some of it, under contract, goes to France and comes back to this country as sardine oil.

TRUST RECIPE FOR TINNED ROAST BEEF

The poorest portion of unfit cattle. Cattle known as "canners" or "downers," if they are too weak to stand, are boiled until every grain of nutriment is extracted and the extracts used for beef extracts and kindred products, while the meat, which is entirely valueless, is doctored to make it look right and not offend the taste.