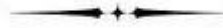


Agriculture



SOUTH WILTS CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE

On Saturday afternoon a meeting of this Chamber was held at the Bath Arms Hotel, Warminster. The president for the year (Mr A. Buckley, of Salisbury) was in the chair, and there were present the Rev. W. Hickman (Warminster), and Messrs C. N. P. Phipps (Chalcot), W. Stratton (Kingston Deverill), W. F. Morgan (Warminster), G. Blake (Chitterne), J. Carpenter (Burcombe), T. K. Harding (Ashton Gifford), W. and T. Chisman (Codford), J. J. Estridge (Sutton Veny), T. S. Rugg (Sherrington), J. N. Parham (Sutton Veny), G. S. Rugg (Sutton Veny), T. N. Redman (Knook), J. Clark (Upton Lovell), C. H. Stratton (Hill Deverill), J. Cooms (Corton), C. Burbidge (Chitterne), J. Flower (Ridge), Stiles E. Jefferys (Rye Hill), John Parry (Fisherton Delamere), C. Notley (Codford), J. Harding (Rodmead), J. Harding (Maiden Bradley), T. P. Galpin (Brixton Deverill), R. A. Long (Sutton Veny), W. C. Cox (Tytherington), S. Parker, W. Couzens, and G. Robertson (Heytesbury), J. Low, and R. Elling (Warminster), R. Coles (Middleton), C. Coles (Winterbourne Stoke), E. H. Neate (Corton), John Pope (Horningsham), H. W. Jeans (Norton Bavant), S. Wiltshire (Monkton Deverill), C. H. Pullin (Kingston Deverill), H. Andrews (Little Langford), E. Parrot (Warminster), J. T. Wooley (hon.sec.) & c.

THE TRIMMING OF ROAD-SIDE HEDGES

The first subject for discussion was "How far Highway Authorities are justified in interfering with fences contiguous to public roads." Mr W. Stratton, in introducing the question, said that, as the law now stood, if a highway authority was of opinion that any hedge contiguous to the highway was prejudicial to the road in the matter of shading, or preventing the sun or air properly circulating in such road, it had the power to order the owner or occupier to cut back or trim the hedge, and if he refused was empowered to apply to the magistrates for a summons upon the owner or farmer to show cause why he should not comply. If the magistrates considered that the hedge was prejudicial to the roads they would make an order to comply with the notice of the highway authority. In corn growing districts it was the custom to cut the hedges quite close, and so there was not likely to be any difference of opinion between the highway surveyor and the owner or occupier of land; but in grass growing districts it was to the interest of the farmer to keep high hedges, as a protection and shelter for his cattle, and not only in the winter was that necessary but also in the summer. As a grass farmer he could testify to the value of good, strong, high fences, and he maintained that where the road was wide and the hedge only overhung the grass on either side, and did not come near the hard road, they should be allowed to grow ten feet high or more. The Act left it entirely to the magistrates to say whether or not any fence was prejudicial to the road, and therefore he would strongly advise them, if a surveyor served a notice on them to cut back their hedges, to allow him to bring the matter before the justices, to whom they could explain their reasons for objecting. That was one of the reasons why he had brought the matter before the chamber, for he wished to show them and the public generally the importance farmers attached to good hedges. Then the Act applied to trees as well as hedges, but he knew that, in some districts, while the farmer was compelled to cut back his fences no notice was taken of the trees that overhung the roads.....

CHARGE FOR LUNCHEON AT FARM STOCK SALES

The next subject was "The advisability of making a charge for luncheon at sales of farming stock." Mr J. N. Parham, who introduced the question, said it was a small one but very important and one that might concern every one of them at any moment. They were not likely to quit their farms for the next few years, perhaps, but a time would come when they would have to quit voluntarily or involuntarily, and therefore it would probably affect them. He knew the auctioneers liked to see a large company round the ring and so did the gentlemen whose property was being sold, and he did not think any of them objected to the expense, though it was no inconsiderable sum. But it was for the convenience of those persons who attended the sales for the purpose of buying that he brought the matter forward. They knew there was generally a great crush for the luncheon and in consequence many who were likely to become buyers and who would be delighted to attend the luncheon stayed away. It seemed to him, therefore, that if a charge, say, of 2s. a head was made it would be a check on those who had no business at the sales. Some gentlemen came a long distance to attend the sales, and the luncheons therefore were indispensable, but if they were unavoidable they should combine together to make a uniform charge of 2s. to those who partook of them. It might not cover the expenses but it would be a check on those who attended the sales for what they could get to eat and drink. He proposed "That this Chamber recommends that a charge of 2s. per head be made on all persons partaking of luncheon at farming stock sales, which shall be returned to those making purchases over £5."

Mr J. Parry seconded, and suggested that the charge should be 2s. 6d.

Mr Woolley, speaking from an auctioneer's point of view, was strongly of opinion that a charge should be made, as he did not think the gentlemen holding sales should be put to the enormous expense they now were. Of course the question whether the 2s. should be returned to buyers was an important matter: he was in favour of no return being made. There were always at sales good bidders who put a considerable sum into the seller's pockets and yet might not purchase £5 worth of stuff and therefore would not be entitled to have the 2s. returned.

Mr Parham expressed his willingness to withdraw the latter part of the resolution.

Mr C. H. Stratton suggested that a committee be appointed to confer with dealers to see if they objected to the charge before the Chamber committed itself to any line of action or made any change.

The Chairman pointed out that the Chamber could only make a recommendation and that it must be left to persons holding the sales whether or not they would act upon it. The resolution, as amended, was carried.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

This was all the business on the agenda, but Mr G. Blake said that before they separated he should like to say a few words in the subject of the Local Taxation Bill. As it was probable that a sum of money would be devoted towards the promotion of technical education in the county it behoved them to see that the promotion of the science of agriculture was not lost sight of and he would suggest that the Council of the Chamber should watch the proceedings of the County Council to see that the interests of agriculture were not overlooked.

Mr Morgan supported Mr Blake's suggestion, and said he was sure the County Council would consider fully the claims of agriculture when deciding that question. He need scarcely remind them that Wiltshire was pre-eminently an agricultural county and anything benefitting agriculture benefitted the county general (hear, hear). In a few week's time a conference would be held at Trowbridge, composed of representatives from all the urban authorities of the county, to consider what steps should be taken in the matter. He had convened the conference and all the authorities but one or two had appointed delegates, and that it occurred to him that it would be very helpful if that Chamber was represented at the meeting, as he thought the claims of agriculture should be fully put forward. He would suggest, therefore, that the Chamber should appoint delegates to the meeting (applause).

The Chairman said the matter as an important one, and he considered Mr Morgan's suggestion very valuable.

After some further discussion, Messrs J. N. Parham, C. Coles, and G. Blake were appointed delegates to the conference.

(Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette – Thursday 4 December, 1890)