

that an effect on the buyer—that he does not like the butter so well?—Certainly; he is suspicious of it even before the exposure. He may have to keep that butter himself for three days, and that added on makes it a week stale.

478. *The Chairman.*] Have you had much experience with Danish butter?—I have sold a great quantity.

479. Would you class it under the same head as Dutch butter?—Yes, at different parts of the year. The Danish season is in the winter time; the Dutch season is in the summer time.

480. Do you know anything about the system of governmental assistance to the Danish butter industry?—No, sir; I know there is such a thing.

481. But you have had no experience?—No.

482. Have you had any experience with butter shipped from Canada?—Yes, two or three times.

483. Was that experience satisfactory?—Oh, no. I must tell you that for the London trade they want butter of a mild flavour. In the north of England they like it of a strong flavour, and that is where most of the Canadian and American butter is sold.

484. And New Zealand butter too?—Well, New Zealand butter will sell all over the country, more particularly the provinces. When it reaches London in a good condition it will sell well there.

485. You would consider it of great importance that cool-storage should be provided at the ports of shipment in New Zealand?—Yes, it should be provided at ports like Wellington. If there had been cool-storage last summer a good many hundreds of pounds would have been saved on the returns from the sale of the butter.

486. *Mr. Mackenzie.*] You stated that the long journey would prevent this colony competing successfully with other markets?—Yes, with other countries nearer to England, as a first-class butter.

487. Yet you also said that you had handled butter when in the London market that left nothing to be desired as to get-up and colour?—Yes, as New Zealand butter.

488. You do not mean as compared with the Home butter?—I am speaking of the New Zealand butter. When the market is short of the best butter New Zealand butter takes the place of it very well; but where a buyer has the preference of buying the finest Danish or the finest Dutch butter, then he will not look for New Zealand butter.

489. The butter here has been as fine as you have seen anywhere in the world?—Yes.

490. But the journey Home causes it to go down to second class?—Yes.

491. Do you think if we got regular and carefully-provided means of transit we could save that butter falling off in quality?—Yes.

492. By that, I mean to have a cool night-carriage to convey the dairy-produce from the farm to the wharf, a cool-store to receive it there, space ready in the vessel, and then to keep the temperature regular all the way Home?—Yes.

493. Do you think we could get over the difficulty by those means?—I expect plenty of space for the next season, but not regular space. Sometimes there will be, perhaps, one or two boats leaving the colony in one week. As the butter is made regularly, some of it must be a little stale here, having been kept for some time before shipment.

494. But, all things being favourable, from your experience, which is very extensive, do you think we could get over that if we got over the difficulty of allowing the butter to lie about?—Yes, that is my idea. What you want is a cool-truck to come down in the night-time. It resolves itself into a question of £ s. d. The freight is too expensive by railway.

495. With reference to the temperature on board ship, do you think the ships keep the temperature as they ought to keep it, or do they allow it to vary much?—They keep as near it as possible. I have been Home and out again and have talked with the engineers. I saw that they keep as near it as possible. The difference in the temperature of the sea-water makes a great difference to the freezing-machine. Sometimes there will be as much as 10° of difference in forty-eight hours.

496. They do their best?—Yes.

497. Do you know how much longer the butter that has been placed in cool-chambers will keep after exposure as compared with frozen butter after it is opened?—The circumstances are never the same with regard to the exposure of butter. There is only one thing that you can really tell, and that is, that frozen butter will go rank after twelve hours' exposure on the counter of a shop.

498. How long would a cask of cool-butter placed beside it keep?—It will keep good long enough for commercial purposes, until it is sold in the ordinary course.

499. You were asked about the cultivation of brands by people here?—Yes.

500. But you do not approve of grading: you do not think the London buyer would pay any attention to any grading-mark we would put on butter here?—No, not as Government marks.

501. Do you think he would respect the brand of any man?—Yes, where that man has proved his brand to be uniform. For instance, I know a man who has a factory in the Taranaki District, and he sent Home his butter as one brand last season, and it was always good. If I were in London I could sell that man's brand of butter before arrival. If he once sent a bad lot Home I could not sell the butter except on inspection.

502. Would not that apply to any brand put on by the Government?—It would apply the same, but self-interest comes in. Self-interest is a better judge than what a paid official would be.

503. Do you think a totara cask as good for packing butter in as an oak cask?—They all say the Norwegian oak is the best; but there is not such a difference as would warrant the expense of bringing it. As I have said before, if the totara cask is well soaked with clean water it is sufficient for all commercial purposes.