

If a man puts in half his time in a cowshed he naturally wishes to improve its condition. They do not desire drastic regulations, especially as they are not in a position to carry them out.

12. If there was no regulation in regard to present sheds when these were erected there should be no interference with these buildings?—I do not think so.

13. *Mr. Lang.*] In regard to section 8, subclause (c), would you understand in reading that that the Inspector would have power to allow a man to put down a wooden floor?—Well, it is very hard to say what floor is impervious to water. I have heard of one man with totara floor being compelled to take it up.

14. *Mr. Hogg.*] Taking your last reply, did you think that matters which can be insisted on should be properly defined?—Yes.

15. Consequently the present regulations in that respect are an improvement on anything we have had?—Yes.

16. Everything should be specified?—Yes, and we want a Court of Appeal.

17. In regard to regulation 9, you object to the delay that must occur if fourteen days' notice has to be given?—Yes.

JOHN WHITE FOREMAN, Chairman of the Tikorangi Co-operative Dairy Company, President of the National Dairy Association (Limited), examined. (No. 23.)

*Witness:* In reference to the regulations, I should like to make the attitude I adopt towards them clear to the Committee. I am not in any way hostile to inspection by the Department of dairy sheds and yards, as proposed here. I have, when the matter has been discussed at meetings of our association in years gone by, opposed it, not because I thought it was undesirable, but because I feared the Department's officers would be rather too insistent on improvements which the majority of our settlers would be unable to comply with, and that it would create a lot of trouble. At present the position of our industry, and I may say a great many people engaged in it, is somewhat different to what it was a few years ago, and I believe the time has arrived when inspection, provided it is not made coercive and unreasonable, would be an assistance to the industry. That is the position that I hold. While doing so I gave some time to the consideration of these regulations, and I also attended a very representative meeting of delegates last Wednesday held at Stratford. The meeting went into the regulations pretty exhaustively, and I generally approve of the suggestions made at that meeting. Where they are different to the views I hold myself I shall tell you. We approved of Nos. 1 and 2, also 3 except the latter clause, which provides that an inspector may withhold a license. I should like to say in connection with that that there is no definite style of cowshed set out. It simply says "shed suitable for milking," and it is left entirely to the Inspector to say what that shed shall be. I think that should be deleted: it is giving far too much arbitrary power to the Inspector. It is provided later on that if a dairyman offends against the regulations he is liable to a fine before a Magistrate, and that gives ample power to enforce conditions of cleanliness. Then we get to the transfer. I agree with the last speaker, and so did the meeting at Stratford. The license should be given the farm. In regard to the registration fee, the meeting at Stratford thought this should be deleted. They regarded the inspection very much in the same light as inoculation of calves for black-leg. In the early stages of the grading of our butter it was also free. This has established a principle. At Palmerston the Chief Inspector of Stock outlined the scheme, stating the fee would be a nominal one and would not exceed 5s. A man with ten cows would have to pay a tax of 1s. a cow, but the man having a hundred would pay 1½d. Paragraph (a) of clause 8: This declares that every dairy shall be provided with a cowshed suitable for milking purposes. An officer of the Department explained to the Stratford meeting that, although it was going to be insisted on that a cowshed should be provided, it need not be an elaborate one. I dare say that is so. The regulations may not be enforced in their entirety, and may not be read literally by the Inspector. But I am going to say, and I speak from personal knowledge of this, that there are a few milk-suppliers, though there are not a great many about, who, if they were compelled to put up a shed, would be placed in a very difficult position. We have two or three in our district. They manage to get a living milking two or three cows off a small holding, but it would be a very difficult matter for them to put up a shed and yards. As a matter of fact, and I may as well be candid with you, these people (one has six and the other eight cows) have to come to our company—and do it as regularly as the spring comes—to borrow money to buy a couple of cows. How these people would put up a shed I do not know. My own opinion is that it is entirely desirable, especially where families are engaged in milking; but there are these isolated cases. I do not know whether you can provide for them. I will pass on to paragraph (e), which refers to the whitewashing of the cowshed. At Stratford it was held that if it was done once a year in the winter-time probably that would suffice. They struck out January, but left in "or oftener if directed by the Inspector." That is, if the shed got into a bad state in the summer—in fact, most men would willingly whitewash it. January is one of our busiest months, and to have to do it at that time would cause inconvenience. Coming to the yard, concreted or paved, this is a very burning question with dairymen in some districts. As many of you are aware, if you get inland in Taranaki you get out of stone country. We thought wood should be accepted in those districts where gravel for concrete is not available. I have no doubt it will be. I believe the Department will be reasonable. It would, however, be better to have the regulations as definite as possible. Section 2 of the same paragraph refers to the race, which has been so much discussed. I have had no experience, nor has there been any experience in my district, of driving cows through a race, but what is universally used in my neighbourhood is the race-shed. My experience is that the cows do not go into this so willingly and freely as where they are bailed. The sheds are made somewhat narrow, and a big cow has to squeeze through. It is my only objection to the race-shed, and I have used one for a long time. It was held that the boss cow would do a lot of worrying, and that this would lead to a diminution in