

5. *Mr. Hogg.*] What is your opinion in regard to the fee? Is it too heavy?—No. Some do not like it, but a great number are prepared to pay it, and recognise that they are getting some return for it. I suppose the country gets the benefit of the inspection.

6. You think yourself it is quite reasonable?—Yes.

JOSEPH BROWN, Chairman of the Maketawa Dairy Company, and a Dairy-farmer of Inglewood, examined. (No. 26.)

*Witness:* I am representing the suppliers to my factory, as well as being a delegate from the Dairy Employers' Union meeting at Stratford. I have been engaged in dairying for twenty-six years, and my farm was a bush one when I took it up, only 4 acres cleared. I am not altogether in agreement with the statement that any inspection is wanted. Any one who has been at the game as long as I have been, twenty-six years, knows the improvements the farmer has made for himself without any compulsion by the Government or any one else. He simply does it for his own benefit and comfort. I do not know one farmer who has put money in the bank. If he is making a few pounds he is spending it on his farm. I myself am not making any money, only in the increased value of the land, which if I wanted to sell would return me something for the time and money I have spent on it. The dairy-farmer, with the aid of the freezing-machine, has worked out his own salvation. I remember when I made butter and sold it for 3d., and then had to take it out. This season the butter of our factory sold at 156s. a hundredweight. Our butter has graded, week in and week out, 96 and as high as 97. We have been at the top of the grading for New Zealand with 93 and 94. The winter butter will not, of course, grade as high as the summer, and this brings down the average. It is impossible for any dairy-factory manager to make stale milk fresh. If the Inspector could give us that extra three points it would be a good thing, but I do not believe all the inspection in the world will give us the extra three points. I recognise from what I have heard this morning that a great many are in favour of inspection, and I am willing to abide by that feeling. In regard to the Stratford meeting, clause 3 provides that an inspector may withhold a license. I do not think that is right, for if an inspector withholds the right what is a supplier to do with his milk? He could not sell it. Then, the transfer fee. This is adding insult to injury. You charge us 10s. for registration, and then charge us 2s. 6d. for a transfer. The license should go along with the farm. Then we come to clause 8, paragraph (e): Lime-washing once a year should be sufficient. In regard to removing the manure, I should like it to read "once a day, and the floor of the shed thoroughly cleansed." Then, in the provision that the yards shall be sufficiently large, &c., I should like the words "divided therefrom by a partition or fence" struck out. Then I object to the dairyman being required to give notice to the Inspector of his intention to make structural alterations. Mr. McNab thinks clause 11 (washing hands after each milking) should be struck out: many in my district think it should be retained. Clause 10 (every person shall keep his person clean) should, however, cover it. Then, as to clause 17, the opinion of the Stratford meeting was that the clause should read something like this: "Every bucket, can, or other utensil used in the handling of milk or cream shall be thoroughly cleansed," and all other words cut out. Clause 19 says that when the Inspector forbids the use of a can he can brand it. If that clause was kept in it would be a great hardship, because if you could brand them and forbid their use there would be a great difficulty in our factory, because if we have a bad can we have to give a fortnight's notice before we can get a new one. A man should be allowed to use a can for fourteen days after notice has been given that it is unfit for use. As to not sending milk from a newly calved cow for four days, as Mr. Foreman pointed out, we agreed this should be six days; but it does not matter what number of days you put in, it would be a difficult matter to detect it. Our own manager has tried time after time to detect it, and the only way to discover it is when cleaning the separator. In regard to the appeal, I certainly think in the case of a dispute that power should be given to apply to the Minister to appoint an Appeal Board, to consist of the Inspector for the district and the director of a factory.

1. *Mr. Okey.*] What is your opinion of the charges for registration?—I think they are too much. I think it should be 2s. 6d., to cover the clerical expenses and pay for the cost of keeping the register.

2. Not above 5s.?—No.

3. You do not think it should be in the nature of a cow-tax?—No.

4. In regard to transfers: You have had considerable experience in the transferring of properties in connection with rates. Do you not find a difficulty in getting notice of transfers?—Yes.

5. There would be the same difficulty in these transfers?—Yes.

JAMES SOUTHEY FOWLER, Dairy-farmer, Manakau, examined. (No. 27.)

*Witness:* I am one of a party which has come down from Otaki and Manakau. I admit we came down full of indignation. We intended to lay before you the feeling of the meetings which have been held. But the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture has deleted so many of the clauses we objected to that there is not a great deal to say. We considered that the whole thing was too drastic, and farcical in the extreme, and that if carried out in its entirety it would no doubt kill the industry, together with the prosperity of the country. I should like to object, on behalf of our meetings, to the registration fee. We think this is altogether out of proportion. A man with 150 cows pays the same as the man with ten. A poor man milking ten or twelve cows has to pay 10s. It is not fair. As to the clause providing the milk-stand, if on the leeward side, to be 60 ft. away: According to this there are many small holdings where it would take nearly 2 acres for the necessary buildings. You require to have a fence right around your buildings, and no man can be expected to make a garden of all that. In regard to the cleansing of utensils, it is impossible for many dairy-farmers to obtain all that is required. In regard to the concrete, there are many places where it would cost £1 2s. for a yard of metal. If other floors are available they