

51. *Mr Rutherford.*] I would like to know if the watch was given the Inspector as a man or as a rabbit inspector on account of the way he did his work?—The man was in our district for a good many years. If the cattle were bad he was always ready to assist us and give us advice. We have not much dairying in the district. It was for his duty altogether outside dairy-inspection we made the presentation. He was transferred or promoted to Wellington.

52. In connection with rabbits or dairying?—In connection with his general duties.

53. You have experience of rabbits. Did he come out early in the morning or late at night? You have complained that an inspector came out early in the morning?—I would not have the time to give him too early in the morning.

54. You had complained that he did?—Yes, at 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning.

55. That is when the rabbits were about. That was not the Inspector to whom you gave the watch?—No. What I complained of was the gross partiality. The Inspector I am talking of was as early as any of them. I was prosecuted for rabbits and fined very heavily.

56. You think the 14,000 miles we are away from Britain is the reason our butter brings a lower price than Danish, and not by reason of impure milk delivered at the dairy factories?—That is really my opinion.

57. You have stated that the bulk of the dairies would be closed down if these regulations were brought in?—A good many of them: not all.

58. Generally speaking, what would it cost to alter the existing dairies that are not in compliance with the Act? Would it cost £200 or £300?—It depends on their size and a lot of things.

59. Dairy land in Taranaki is worth £20 to £30 an acre?—Yes.

60. Is there any other purpose to which it could be put which would give a better return than dairying?—If you had a family and treated them as slaves perhaps it would pay.

61. *Mr. Okey.*] Are children milking cows not equal in physique to any other?—That does not prevent the fact that many are working for nothing.

62. Is there any other purpose to which land could be used to greater advantage?—I can speak of myself. I pay men for milking £1 5s. a week, and give them show holidays, &c. I maintain, if I abolished dairying and went in for sheep and cattle fattening I should make more money.

63. *Mr. Lang.*] Was the gold watch given to the Inspector because he was a different inspector to other inspectors you have a knowledge of?—It was not exactly the gold watch. It was just to show appreciation of the fact that a public officer had discharged his duty for a number of years in an able and efficient manner. It was nothing to do with the question before us at the present time.

64. He carried out his duties in an exceedingly just and proper manner, and that was not your experience with other inspectors?—I am not going to condemn the other inspectors.

65. Are you in favour of a tax on dairy cows?—No. You have taken it off the sheep and put it on a harder industry. The sheep-farmers are a wealthy class and more able to bear it.

66. Do you understand by the wording of this that you could put down a wooden floor if impervious to water?—Yes.

67. You understand that Danish butter realises the highest price on the market?—Generally about 2s. a hundredweight higher than New Zealand.

68. Are you aware that they have no Government inspection, and that all the inspection is done by farmers' associations?—I do not know who does the inspection.

69. It is not Government inspection?—I am not sure.

70. You are not in favour of Government inspection?—No.

71. But in favour of inspection by the farmer?—Yes.

72. And you would like to have veterinary surgeons for each province?—Yes.

EDMOND CLIFTON, Chief Inspector of Stock, examined. (No. 33.)

*Witness:* The supervision of the dairy industry, of the milk-supply of the Dominion, is not a thing initiated by the Department itself, or asked for by it. It really comes about at the request of the leaders of the dairy industry. It commenced a good many years ago in Dunedin, where the representatives of the farmers, through their associations, asked this to be undertaken, and they were so anxious that they offered to pay a rate of 6d. a cow towards the cost of the supervision. That was the position for some time. The immediate beginnings of the supervision bringing about these regulations was a request made at the Conference of the National Dairy Association at Palmerston North about two years ago. I was asked to attend the meeting, the object of the discussion being to improve the general milk-supply of the Dominion. The industry was represented by many of its leaders. They pointed out that in their estimation there was, from a manufacturing point of view, no great improvement to be made; but their factory-managers found great fault with a great proportion of the milk presented to them. The general opinion of that meeting was that the improvement should begin at the farm end—that the supply should be under supervision. That, too, was the decision of the meeting. That was the beginning of the present proposals culminating in the offering to you of these regulations. After that I met by request the Dairy Association in Dunedin. The position was explained there. It held the same view as the delegates at the Palmerston Conference. The next meeting at Palmerston indorsed the previous action, and the leaders in the industry were very anxious to have the supervision carried out. One of the points they brought forward as leading up to this subject was the fact that where dairying was intense, as in Taranaki, there were rival factories and creameries in the neighbourhood of each other, and if at one of these places the milk was refused it was taken to the other. This became so acute that it was even suggested that legislation should be introduced to deal with it. That seemed very difficult to arrive at, and the suggestion favoured was the possibility of cutting off the supply of unsatisfactory milk by starting at the farm end. After this, dairy inspectors were appointed (thirty-four). All have had experience on dairy