

certain depresses the value of property in this township. We have got a lot of fine farming country all round here. Paeroa is the junction of the Thames-Waihi and Auckland Railways, and is the prospective junction of the Pokeno Railway. I consider we should have here one of the finest inland towns in the Dominion. A short time back some lots were put up for sale, and there was a little competition for the higher sites, but none for the lower.

68. As chairman of the Thames Valley Co-operative Dairy Company, can you give us some particulars of the working of your company?—Our turnover last year was £51,000. We consider the quality of our butter to be second to none in the Dominion. All our butter is exported from New Zealand, and is graded by Government Graders, and the total average grade was made up at the end of the season. For three seasons running we have been once first and twice second out of all the factories in the Auckland Provincial District. This year if we are not first we are coming out within a fraction of it. Our average grade this year is higher than that of New Plymouth or Patea. Our average this year is 93·16; New Plymouth, 93·12; and Patea, 93·4. The totals have not been made up yet, but we think we shall be first. In addition to this we have won numerous prizes in competitions with our butter. Our output last year was about 400 tons of butter. We export part, and sell the remainder locally.

STATEMENT HANDED IN BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE THAMES VALLEY CO-OPERATIVE DAIRYING COMPANY.

As far as net returns are concerned there is very little between local price and export price; therefore we are not in any way dependent on the mines for a market. We appreciate the market they provide, and cater for it, but consider we should be able to operate just as successfully if it did not exist. The success of a co-operative dairying company is gauged by the amount they can return to their shareholders for their milk or butter-fat. Comparison will show that other companies who have no local market, but export the greater part of their output, can return to their suppliers as much per pound of butter-fat as we can. Thames Valley Dairying Company, last year, 10·98d.; Stratford Company, 10·83d.; Midhurst Company, 11·69d.; Cambridge Company, 12·5d. and 10·62d.; Ballance Company, 11·12d.

Comparison of Prices received this Season, since 1st September, for Export and Local Sales of Butter.

Export.—Thirteen shipments, prices ranging from 111s. to 129s. per hundredweight. Quantity, 4,816 cwt.; value, £28,509 2s.; average gross price, 118s. 6d. per hundredweight. Average charge for freight, commission, insurance, &c., 10s. 4d. per hundredweight. Average net return, 108s. 2d. per hundredweight, or 11·55d. per pound. Returns of four small shipments to come to hand: these will not materially affect average price.

Local.—Wholesale price—September and October, 1s. 0½d. per pound; November, December, January, February, 11½d. per pound; March and April, 1s. 0½d. per pound. Average gross wholesale price, 1s. per pound. Deduct 2½ per cent. from this and pay delivery, railway, freight, storage and handling, pounding and wrappers, extra clerical work; take credit risks, bad debts, &c. Wrote off £470, 31st May, 1909: Principal ones—Waihi Workers' Co-op., £140 9s. 6d.; other goldfields storekeepers, £110, £50, £60, £48 respectively.

These figures show conclusively that we could carry on just as profitably for our shareholders if no local market existed. Erroneous ideas prevail as to the profits of a co-operative dairying company. Our balance-sheet for the year ending 31st May, 1909, showed these to be £4,793; but this amount is simply the difference between the amount advanced to shareholders month by month and the net amount realized for butter-fat treated.

The business of the company has been increasing, but it would increase much more rapidly were not a great deal of the land on the river-banks becoming so subject to floods and damage by tailings.

The average price of butter on the Home markets has been steadily advancing for the last few years; to this is directly attributable the prosperity of the dairy industry in this district and the whole Dominion.

Total Amounts paid out to Suppliers at Netherton Creamery.

Season.	December.	January.	February.	March.	April.	Falling-off.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
1905-6 ...	713	653	520	489	387	326, or 45 per cent.
1906-7 ...	1,275	910	574	445	267	1,008, ,, 178 ,,
1907-8 ...	881	883	689	632	522	359, ,, 40 ,,
1908-9 ...	1,098	1,007	782	674	592	506, ,, 46 ,,
1909-10 ...	1,210	1,042	725	694	522	688, ,, 56 ,,

Amounts paid to Individual Suppliers, 1906-7.

	Affected by Flood.					April.
	December.	January.	February.	March.		
	£	£	£	£ s. d.	£	
Fisher Bros. ...	155	108	46	1 9 8	...	...
Adamson, F. ...	47	34	20	1 0 0	...	...
Moore, W. ...	73	47	24	12 0 0	...	...
Robinson, I. ...	54	34	21	17 0 0	...	5
Stock, R. ...	29	21	12	12 0 0	...	10
Thomas, J. ...	27	20	11	9 0 0	...	...