

47 Would you be surprised to hear that one of the members of the House paid a contractor 2s. 6d. per ton for pulling, topping, and lifting his crop of turnips into the cart?—No, I am not surprised at what any man could get work done for

48. You mean to say that it is feasible or reasonable to expect beets to be lifted, topped, set into the cart, and carted, say, an average of five miles, at the rate of 2s. 3d. per ton? On an 18-ton crop it would come out at 2s. 3d. per ton?—I submitted my figures to practical working farmers—men who know the value of work in the district—and I should say that they are reasonable.

49. The *Journal of Agriculture* gives the analysis of beets grown in the Waikato. Would you consider that a fair average of the percentage of sugar? For instance, take Hamilton. The percentage ranged from 10·05 to 14·05. The percentage in Raglan is 8·14 again, in Turakina, 13·57?—We do not know where the seed has come from; it may be taken from anywhere. I wrote to a firm in Wellington for seed, and I grew 20 per cent. of saccharine matter, and the seed had no history. I should say these percentages are very satisfactory, considering that they have been grown by people who simply just grow the beets as a test, without any special care.

50. Would you be surprised to know that at Mr Spreckels's factory in California, considered at the time to be the most up-to-date in the world, because he had been to Germany—that all in the neighbourhood of 10 per cent. would be practically rejected—that they would not give a shilling per ton for them?—All below 10 per cent they would reject, however, it pays the farmer to feed his stock with them.

51 That could only be ascertained on presentation at the factory?—A cartload of roots is taken to the factory, and before the man leaves, and in a few minutes, the test is applied. With your permission, Mr Chairman, I should like to say that it would be a desirable thing to have experiments carried out on different farms, and invite the settlers to make complete records themselves. I took on that duty myself some years ago as the secretary of the Sugar-beet-growing Committee.

52 *Hon. Mr T Mackenzie.*] Do you think, if this Bill becomes law, that enterprising people, under the provisions of this Bill, will form a company to develop the beet industry?—I believe so. I have every confidence that they would do so. As the machinery necessary is very expensive, and can only be made in certain parts of the world, it would be a big help to the industry all round if the Government or State could see its way to allow the machinery to come in free of duty. The Bill itself otherwise, I think, is very satisfactory.

53 Regarding the prospects of success, is it not a fact that there is a great development in the improvement of machinery?—Yes, in recent years. There is one point in connection with machinery which has had this effect: In the earlier history of the sugar-beet one of the great difficulties in making pure sugar was the making of "invert" sugar, it formed what is called "invert" sugar. But that has been entirely overcome by scientific investigation and modern machinery.

54. I notice that in attributing the lack of success to the Australian venture you say that it averaged just about 8 per cent. of sugar. The report I read stated that when being treated 9,000 tons showed 14 per cent. yet they only recovered half?—That was through faulty manufacture.

55. Do you think it will pay the farmers if they get £1 per ton?—Yes, in England they are sending roots to Germany for 16s.

56. Have you considered the question of getting sugar from Indian corn in preference to beet?—It is not so much the question of getting sugar that I am worrying about. What I am concerned about is the cultivation of the sugar-beet, and, knowing what it has done for other countries, I see no reason why it should not do the same thing for New Zealand.

57 There are some men who are pretty well up in the subject who now consider that from the same ground better results are obtained from Indian corn?—You must go on the practice of practical men. The inland frosts, I understand, would kill it.

58. *Mr Witty*] I understood you to say, Mr Young that what you had done yourself was mostly experimental?—My growing of beets has been for experimental purposes.

59 The most you had, I think, was 18·7 per cent.?—That was with old beets which had been lying for some time in the yard.

60. The mere fact of their being in a box would rather improve them than cause them to deteriorate?—That is a matter of opinion.

61 With regard to cultivation, I do not want to go into the ploughing as Mr Buchanan has done, but with regard to the carting I think you are altogether out of it. I have sent a good many hundred tons of swedes an average distance of three miles. We get our swedes packed and sewn up for 4s. per ton. The beets would cost just as much to cart as swedes would, or at any rate, the subsoiling would be on the same plane?—I stated this, in putting in the estimate for subsoiling—that it would depend upon the soil to a certain extent.

62. You were going to form a company up in the Waikato, I understand?—Yes.

63 And you were advised by the bankers not to do so?—In this way: We guaranteed to grow so many acres of beets, but when we came to execute the agreements we found that it amounted to a joint and several bond. The joint and several bond was then to cultivate 1,500 acres. It would ruin a man to be let in to cultivate more than he had ability to deal with.

64. As individual settlers, how do we know that you would be prepared to support the factory, supposing it was there? If anything else paid you better would you put in sugar-beet?—I am not going to grow sugar-beet if I can get anything better out of my land.

65 With regard to the factory that you say was a failure, all the return they got was about 13 per cent.?—I have not given you the Victorian return. I have given you the fact that it was a failure, and the reasons why.