

18. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] But paraffining would not be so expensive as two thicknesses of parchment paper?—About the same. It costs about 1d. a box to paraffin.

19. Do you know what price the Dairy Association in this district is paying for their boxes?—I understand they are paying up to 1s. in some cases.

20. In Dunedin we had evidence that they were paying 1s. 8½d.?—They are not paying that here, but only about 1s.

21. Where do they get their boxes from?—Many are made in Wellington by the Wellington Cooperage Company.

22. *Mr. Murdoch.*] Is it essential that the white-pine should all be seasoned?—Yes. It is detrimental to the cheese if it is not seasoned.

23. Seeing the large demand there is likely to be for timber for agricultural produce, do you consider it would be a wise policy for the Government to encourage the planting of trees by settlers so that there may be a timber-supply distributed throughout the country, thus saving heavy accounts for freight, &c?—Yes; it is only a matter of time when we shall be very badly off for timber for our boxes, so I would encourage the planting of trees, especially quick-growing varieties that will come into profitable use at an early date.

WINNARD MELTON SINGLETON sworn and examined. (No. 81.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—Assistant Director of the Dairy-produce Division.

2. You came from Canada?—Yes. I have been twelve years in New Zealand, and had considerable experience in dairy matters before I left Canada.

3. Can you tell us what style of package the butter is packed in there, and the class of timber used?—At one time they used the round tub a good deal, of spruce timber, but of late years they have used boxes like ours here, of the same dimensions, to hold a similar quantity. The pine is used principally, but it differs somewhat from our pine in that it imparts a flavour to the butter which is not desirable, and to overcome it they use paraffin. They also use parchment paper as well as the paraffin.

4. Have they unlimited supplies of the required timber?—I believe so, and they are getting now a large quantity from British Columbia. Although the timber is limited in North Ontario the supply there is by no means exhausted yet.

5. Do you think the *Pinus insignis* timber, as per this sample, would do for butter-boxes if treated with paraffin?—It would seem all right as far as quality goes.

6. Is it a timber that it would be advisable to experiment with seeing that it can be grown very rapidly?—Yes, paraffined it should be worth trying.

7. A lot of the white-pine boxes are paraffined here, are they not?—Yes; it is claimed that a saving is made in regard to the shrinkage of 4 oz. of butter. Some firms put in as much as 4 oz. less on that account.

8. Here is a white-pine board made up of some small pieces by means of a dovetailing machine. Would that do for butter-boxes?—We had trouble with some boards which had been put together in only two pieces, and on the grading-room floor when we were opening up the boxes they came apart. At the same time, in my experience of cheese-crates, when two pieces of board were put together for the ends the boxes were satisfactory.

9. Is there much butter exported from Canada now?—Practically none was exported last year. The export has been decreasing for some years.

10. Then there is likely to be an increasing demand on New Zealand for butter from abroad?—Yes. They export a good deal of cheese, and there is a tendency in a number of districts to return to butter on account of the increased local demand for the latter.

11. How is the cheese packed there?—It is packed in something like a hat-box made of cardboard, with a belt around it.

12. Of what timber?—Elm for the belt, and bass wood for the headpiece.

13. *Mr. Murdoch.*] Can you say what class of package is sent from other countries, such as Denmark and Siberia, to Britain with butter?—A good deal was sent in casks when I was there five years ago.

14. And from Siberia?—I did not see much from there, but am speaking of Danish more particularly.

GIBBES CLAUDE BORLASE JORDAN sworn and examined. (No. 82.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You are the Under-Secretary for Justice?—Yes, which includes Prisons.

2. What percentage of the male prisoners is engaged in tree-planting operations?—The numbers at the different camps for the year 1912 were: Waiotapu, 35; Waipa, 20; Hanmer, 25.

3. What was the total number of male prisoners in prison during the year ending 31st December, 1912?—We have between eight hundred and nine hundred prisoners.

4. Can you give us any idea if the number employed at tree-planting in 1912 is likely to be increased?—We could increase it, but we have to be very careful what class of prisoners we send to these camps. We have been very strict of late, and that has reduced the number. It was necessary, because the camps were not in the condition they ought to have been in; but by employing a larger staff and having more supervision we can probably send a larger number of prisoners there that could not be sent out with the present staff. There are forty prisoners at Kaingaroa and four officers, and all those prisoners could run away at any time they liked. We have to depend on their good behaviour. But these prison camps are very expensive to run; the smaller the number of prisoners the greater the cost of maintenance.