

I have another sheet here which I am very anxious to put in. I will read it to the Committee. It deals with the total value of the milk for each year, and statistics are given with respect to the hours worked by the milkers compared with the hours worked by carpenters, watersiders, and freezing-works employees:—

| Year.         | Total Milk. | Year.          | Total Milk.  |
|---------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|
|               | £ s. d.     |                | £ s. d.      |
| 1904-5 .. ..  | 698 11 8    | 1914-15 .. ..  | 821 19 0     |
| 1905-6 .. ..  | 850 18 8    | 1915-16 .. ..  | 1,528 19 11  |
| 1906-7 .. ..  | 1,067 18 0  | 1916-17 .. ..  | 1,272 0 0    |
| 1907-8 .. ..  | 961 12 3    | 1917-18 .. ..  | 1,090 0 11   |
| 1908-9 .. ..  | 830 11 9    | 1918-19 .. ..  | 975 19 8     |
| 1909-10 .. .. | 1,598 15 0  | 1919-20 .. ..  | 1,625 0 0    |
| 1910-11 .. .. | 794 0 0     |                |              |
| 1911-12 .. .. | 1,218 10 8  | 15 years .. .. | £16,444 13 0 |
| 1912-13 .. .. | 1,109 15 6  |                |              |

Average milk per year, £1,096 6s. 2½d.

*Cost of Production of Butter (Labour only; no Rent).*

Five milkers. Herd, 100 cows to start with.

Allowing five milkers working eight hours a day for 300 days, at waterside wages (2s. 4d., 4s. 4d., 5s.) (no overtime) = £1,500. Loss, £403 13s 0¾d.

As carpenters get 4s. 4d. overtime (Saturday afternoons, holidays, Sundays, and Mondays to 8 a.m., 5s.), and farmers work a third of their time overtime—five men for 4,000 hours at, say, 2s. extra = £400. Loss would be £803 13s. 9d.

Freezing-works rates (almost 2s.): Eight hours, five men, 300 days = £1,200. Loss on labour alone (no overtime), £113 6s. 3d.

If one-third overtime paid for as works hands at, say, 1s. = £200. Loss, £313 6s. 3d.

*Cost of Production (Labour only).*

Four milkers. Herd, 90 cows.

Carpenters and watersiders' rates: Four men to 90 cows = 22½ cows each. Four men working eight hours for 300 days at 2s. 6d. (engine, benzine, upkeep, &c., £70) = £1,270. Loss, £172 13s. 10d.

If farmers got overtime or overtime hours on Sundays and holidays for a third of their time, same as watersiders = £320 extra. Total loss, £493 13s.

Freezing-works rates: Four men, eight hours for 300 days at 2s. per hour = £1,030. Profit, £66 6s. 3¼d.

If one-third for overtime (Sundays, holidays, over hours). Loss would be £93 13s. 8¾d.

NOTE.—If no rent for land allowed or charged, or interest on cows, or depreciation on stock or buildings, butter could not be produced on past year's figures at union rates of wages.

2. *Mr. McCombs.*] You made a comparison in that statement with the waterside workers' wages?—I have worked out what it would cost to produce butter at the union rate of wages.

3. Ranging up to 5s. an hour?—I did not put it at 5s. an hour; I allowed 2s. 6d. for watersiders, and 2s. for freezing-works workers, and I allowed up to 4s. for overtime. At times they get 5s. on the wharves for overtime, but I struck an average of 4s. In the case of freezing-works workers I allowed an additional shilling, which is very much under the freezing-works workers' rates of pay for overtime.

4. I have here an extract from the *New Zealand Dairyman* taken from "Dairy-farming in New Zealand," by W. Powdrell, M.P., showing a share-milking agreement. I presume you will vouch for the accuracy of it?—That is my milking agreement with my own share milkers for a period of fifteen years. I have had over twenty years' experience in connection with dairying, and I am chairman of one of the largest cheese-factories in New Zealand at the present time.

5. By this agreement the share milker only gets one-third of the value of the milk?—In the first year, milking heifers, the share milker got one-half, and then when the values of land rose and he purchased the farm he was only expected to reduce or pay off his land and cows purchased by two-fifths of milk-moneys, and then when values rose again he paid off land purchased by one-third of monthly milk-moneys, so that as land became dearer his terms of repayment were made easier for him.

6. One-third with machines?—Yes. That is the general rate at the present time for share milking.

7. As the land went up in price you took a larger and larger share of the other man's production?—Yes, after putting machines in; but when the price of land went up the price of butter went up also. At the present time share milkers are a long way better off than they were in 1904. The farmer has greater risks now with dear land and dearer cows, while the share milker's risks are nil, and his profits now amount to one-third of 2s. 6d. per pound butterfat, as against two-fifths of 8d., or 3¼d. per pound in 1904.

8. *Mr. Kellest.*] I have one question I would like to ask you, Mr. Powdrell: would you be in favour of an export tax?—No, I would not.

9. Have you any ideas on the subject?—I deny absolutely the right of any one to interfere with the farmers' prices. You have no more right to interfere with the farmers' prices than you have to interfere with any man's private banking account. If it is necessary to reduce the cost of butter in this country, then I am of opinion it should only be done by a subsidy out of the Consolidated Fund. As the same time I consider that such a subsidy should be given so as to benefit only the man with a wife and family, one who is not paying income-tax. I would not allow hotels, boardinghouses, shipping companies, or the retired rich to get cheap butter at the expense either of the country or the farmer. That is my opinion.