

"Comparison of Prices, 1914 and 1920."

Article.						1914.			1920.			Increase.		
						£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Manures—Slag	..	..	..	..	..	4	0	0	13	0	0	9	0	0
Superphosphate	..	..	..	..	..	4	2	6	11	10	0	7	7	6
Bonedust	..	..	..	..	..	8	0	0	22	0	0	14	0	0
Wire—No. 8 plain	..	..	..	..	..	12	10	0	65	0	0	52	10	0
Barb	..	..	..	..	..	17	0	0	73	0	0	56	0	0
Wages	..	..	..	..	..	1	5	0	2	10	0	.	5	0
						and found			and found					
Stock—Cows	..	..	..	..	..	7	0	0	20	0	0	13	0	0
Horses	..	..	..	..	..	15	0	0	30	0	0	15	0	0
Dray (new) and harness	..	..	..	..	..	25	0	0	45	0	0	20	0	0
Shoeing (per set)	..	..	..	..	..	0	6	0	0	12	6	0	6	6

"Cheese v. Butter."

"Low price of butter decreases output. Result: T.V. output, 1918-19—butter 150 tons increase, cheese 1,066 tons increase; 1919-20—butter 98 tons increase, cheese 1,004 tons increase.

"Retail Prices of Butter."

"Australia, 2s. 10d.; England, 3s. (controlled), 4s. 6d. to 5s. (local)."

21. *The Chairman.*] Would you care to give any evidence yourself from the producer's or seller's point of view?—I could only give evidence on general lines.

22. You are not actually engaged in the business at present?—I am not actually producing.

23. Have you anything to say on behalf of the National Dairy Association from the factory's point of view?—Well, more from the producer's point of view if I have to speak at all, but I am not actually engaged in the business. I did not come here with the idea of giving any evidence; it was only to personally present those statements.

JOHN MCKAY CAMPBELL examined. (No. 9.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—I am secretary of the Wellington Trades and Labour Council. I wish to explain, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, that I am only here in response to a telephone message from the clerk to the Committee. There has been no meeting of the Council, and therefore I have no mandate from the Council to attend myself, but being the Council's secretary I thought I might as well come down and see what was doing. I have read the Press reports of the proceedings of the Committee, and I find that all I would have to say has already been said. I am not going to weary you gentlemen with unnecessary reiteration of the same statements. But there is one question which concerns the working-class especially—of which, fortunately or unfortunately, I happen to be one—and that is this: while not decrying the farmer for asking the highest possible price for the products of his farm, which we recognize is a failing or possibly a virtue of humanity generally—we are all trying to get the most we can—it so happens that naturally the large majority of us fail to get what we conceive to be a fair share of the spoil. This, of course, you will recognize to be a fact, and this is what I was going to point out: that it is only reasonable for the farmer to ask that he should have the same price f.o.b. in Wellington that is offered on the English market. Given that, it follows that those who have to buy those products as necessities for their existence must have a relatively increased rise in their incomes. How that is to be brought about, of course, I would not care to advise such a Committee as this, who no doubt know so much more about the matter than I do. But the gravity of the situation which might arise must also be obvious. One discontented man is a nuisance, but a whole community of discontented people would mean that the result might be very grave. I have no doubt you will agree with me that the most trying situation conceivable is in the case of the man who is trying to get an adequate amount of food and clothing for his wife and children. Fortunately I can find plenty for my family to eat and drink, but I will go as far as this and say that I know that the average working-man in New Zealand to-day is living from hand to mouth. Certainly that is so in Wellington. I have heard Mr. Harkness tell the Committee that the average wages of the dairying labourer is £3 10s. per week and found. That would be equivalent in Wellington to, say, £5 a week. Board and lodging, I believe, cannot be got at less than £1 10s. per week. Under those circumstances it is somewhat of a mystery to me how the farmers find it difficult to get labour. I can confidently affirm that the average labourer in Wellington does not average £3 a week, and out of that he has to pay rent, which is low at £1 5s., and that leaves him only £1 15s. a week to provide him and his family with the necessities of life. That is the position.

2. *Mr. Powdrell.*] You are not asserting that the waterside workers only get £3 a week?—They are only one class of workers. I am speaking of the average unskilled worker. I happen to be the secretary of a union of unskilled workers.

3. *The Chairman.*] That is, the labourer?—The unskilled labourer, such as employed by the City Council.

4. You are not referring to the drivers, because the City Council employs a large staff—you do not suggest they only get £3 a week?—I suggest that, and know of a case where one man, the father of a family of nine, had not been working for one week. The City Council pays £4 3s. 6d. a week, provided the man works the whole week, but there are men who only earn as much as £3 a week.