

hood of Wanganui. This I would consider a fair crop; 30 tons I consider a heavy crop. In my opinion, the farmer would require from 7s. to 10s. per ton for the beet, delivered at his farm, to make the growing of beet pay any profit; but the farmer would require a guarantee that the crop would be sold at maturity, or he could not grow it at the price mentioned; and the farmer would require to grow a number of acres to pay at that price at all. Should a sugar-mill be started in the Town of Wanganui, or in any central country district, a considerable reduction in the present tariff per rail would require to be made when the beet is carried over a number of miles.

FRUIT-PRESERVING.

No. 4.

Evidence of HENRY BUDDEN, taken by Mr. Commissioner A. J. Burns at Nelson, 2nd April, concerning the Establishment of a Fruit-preserving Factory.

My name is *Henry Budden*, a nurseryman. I have resided in Nelson two years and six months, and in New Zealand twenty years. I have been following the trade of a nurseryman ever since my arrival. In the course of my trade I have turned my attention to fruit-growing, and am of opinion that the soil and climate of Nelson are peculiarly adapted for the growth of fruit; although there is one kind of red currant (the old variety) which does not succeed well here. To attain a good, sound crop of fruit, the ground must be thoroughly cultivated before planting; and after planting, the trees must be properly pruned and attended to, and strict attention be paid to the nourishment and cleanliness of the trees. For some time back I have turned my attention to the establishment of a fruit-preserving factory at Nelson, and I find that for the successful development of such an undertaking a very much larger area of ground must be devoted to fruit-growing; and by so doing, many acres of land now unoccupied by anything but weeds would be turned to profitable account if fruit was grown upon them. I am of opinion that one man would find profitable employment on four acres of land, confining himself to the growing of small fruit (berries), but would require assistance at first in planting and gathering. He might at the same time grow some of the larger fruits; and, if he confined himself to these, he might after a year or two successfully cultivate twelve acres with the usual assistance in gathering. Eventually the profits derivable from the four acres of small fruit would be about equal to the profits derived from the twelve acres of large fruit, but the four acres would require more labour being expended in any one year. But I am of opinion that it would add to the profits of small-fruit growing to extend the area of ground and employ labour to almost any extent in the cultivation, even more than it would do in extending the area and employing the labour in the cultivation of large fruit. I find from the published statistics that £90,000 is sent out of the country every year for fruit that could be as well and as profitably grown in Nelson. I have gone very closely and accurately into the cost of producing preserved fruits, and have got most reliable data as to the prices charged for the imported article; and am clearly of opinion that, if a factory was established in Nelson, an article could be produced of a superior quality and at a cheaper rate than it can be imported. But, to give a little encouragement to the factory, and to induce the New Zealand public to consume the colonial production, it would be desirable that a duty be placed upon the imported article; and, until sugar-growing is established in the colony, a reduction or a total abolition of the sugar duty would very materially assist the development of this industry; also an abolition or reduction of the duty upon sheet-tin and solder, as a very large quantity of tin is required for the purpose of tinning the fruit for transit, fruit keeping better in tins than in jars or bottles. I am aware that, in anticipation of the establishment of a fruit-preserving factory in Nelson, an extended area of fruit-trees has been planted; and I have no doubt that, if the company was fully formed and in active operation, the supply of fruit of all kinds would find a ready market, and the fruit-consumers of New Zealand would obtain a good, sound, wholesome article, superior to anything that can be imported.

No. 5.

Evidence of SAMUEL CARTER, taken by Mr. Commissioner A. J. Burns at Motueka on the 6th of April, on Fruit-preserving.

My name is *Samuel Carter*. I have resided in Motueka fourteen years, and in the colony thirty-eight years. I have been an agriculturist and a gardener. I have had considerable experience in growing fruit out of doors. I should say that this district is the best part of New Zealand for fruit-growing: it is not troubled with high winds, enabling the fruit-blossom to be undisturbed when the fruit is forming; and I have never known the blossom to be disturbed by spring frosts. To insure success, thorough cultivation of both tree and land is absolutely necessary—the one by judicious pruning, and the other by care and suitable manuring and clearing. We have been subject to the “American blight;” but it is easily cured. I have had trees so bad with blight that scarcely a leaf remained on them; but by a solution of quicklime and water, freely used through a syringe, it quickly disappears; and by using a little salt with the manure the blight on the roots disappears to such an extent as to be harmless. Two years of this treatment will cure a tree if it is very bad with blight; and I should say dressing once a year was quite sufficient. The manure I prefer is guano and bone-dust, applied as a top-dressing to nourish the surface-fibres and small roots from which the tree draws its fruit-bearing properties. The Cambridge pippin, the French crab, the Ribston pippin, the lemon pippin, and codlin are species of apples very subject to attacks from blight; but by careful treatment these kinds of apple trees can be made good fruit-bearing trees, and will amply remunerate any care bestowed upon them. With regard to small fruit (berries), careful cultivation and pruning is all that is required to produce remunerative crops. Four acres of land would be quite sufficient for one man to attend to properly, and a good living can be made out of it—even more so than one man could make out of a fifty-acre farm either in grass or cultivation, taking into consideration rent, working expenses, and present prices for stock, grain, and fruit. If a man grew all large fruit, he could attend to eight