

52. Do you think any drastic inspection would make any difference to the purity of the milk-supply?—A gentle pressure which will proceed in the direction of a pure-milk supply is certainly very necessary.

53. Yes, but could you make a vast amount of difference in the quality of your produce?—I do not know.

54. *Mr. Buddo.*] You mentioned it would be a great hardship for the dairy-farmer if he was not allowed to take dressed pigs to the station when he was going to the factory? Do you not think some little blood falling on the cart would be the worst kind of taint?—I think it would be so infinitesimal it would not matter.

55. You favour using the cart for general purposes so long as the commodity carried is free from taint?—The cart should be thoroughly washed. The bulk of dairymen have only one cart. It would be a great hardship.

56. You suggest a concrete race of 10 ft. would be quite sufficient between the yard and the shed. If I mentioned that a witness has given the cost of a 30 ft. by 6 ft. concrete race at £4 where shingle was available, what would you say to that?—He would not get much for his labour.

57. He said it could be done by the farmer himself. Suppose it was £5, would you consider it a serious outlay?—The greatest objection we see to it is where the buildings are already up. We consider you should have the concrete yard immediately in front of the cowshed.

58. Do you think the greatest danger to milk is from the dust flying into it owing to the movement of cattle in front of the cowshed?—I believe it is.

59. One witness said he was in favour of a dust-proof fence, 6 ft. high, in front of the cowshed or the yard. Would you approve of such a fence?—No.

60. Would you approve of a concrete yard in front of the shed alone?—Yes.

61. *Mr. Okey.*] You are on the directorship of your factory?—Yes.

62. Is it a general agreement to back up the manager?—Yes.

63. And is it not to the interest of the manager that he should have pure milk?—Yes.

64. It works two ways?—A manager may be working on contract.

65. It is to the interest of the manager?—Yes, and it is backed up in that direction.

W. FUGE, Dairy-farmer, Kaiwaewae, Wairarapa, examined. (No. 12.)

Mr. Fuge made the following statement:—

I am representing practically the South Wairarapa, and both large and small dairy-farmers, and mostly small men. Mr. Fisher, the previous witness, is a colleague of ours. Different chairmen of different factories met centrally and conferred on these matters, and we are quite in accord with the evidence just given. For my own part, I have been in the dairy industry for twenty-four years. I started with seven cows, and now I have eighty or ninety; so you see I have been through the mill. I may say that these regulations, or the thought of them being put into force, is causing a lot of irritation, because dairymen are wondering what they are going to be. They would like to see some simple regulations they could all read and understand as well as the Inspector. It is the Inspector's power they feel. At present the regulations have not been out, and they are at a standstill. They do not know what to do. I am in accord with Mr. Fisher in regard to the registration fee. In our district there are a good number of dairy-farmers registered every year for consigning milk to Wellington. I myself registered last March, owing to the scarcity of milk. That was 5s. Then the period was put back to July, and I had to pay again for selling from March to August. To some the matter of the registration fee would be a mere bagatelle, but, again, to those just starting every shilling tells. No one likes dairying if they can possibly get anything else to do. It is only this: it is the first essential on the land—that is, a man can get regular work and keep his family around. He does not take it up for the love of it. He cannot get rich on it. My people are asking for some one to explain the regulations to them. I may mention that I started with a shed with two bails. I then enlarged it to twelve bails. I now have two sheds bricked floors throughout. At the end of the shed I have a place for cooling the milk. Most of the large dairy-farmers in my district cool their milk here, as it is there where they have their water-supply. If we had to shift the milk-stand 30 ft. away it would be a great hardship. They have no complaint whatever about their produce, and they would not improve their produce did they shift their buildings away. In regard to the interpretation of the race. No one seems to understand what the race means. As I understand it to-day, any one with concrete yards is not required to have the race. If anything wants to be put in about the race it wants to be put in very clearly. If you have to make a race it is a very expensive idea. There is a concrete bottom to it, and altering existing yards and fencing. The fencing against cattle would be almost as great an expenditure as making the race itself. Where you are a long way away as regards material, and where you have to pay for haulage, it comes to a mighty expense—more than any of you would credit.

1. *Mr. Okey.*] Your experience is with both the town supply and factory?—Yes.

2. Do you think there should be the same regulations for both town and factory?—Yes, you need to supply as good milk to the factory as to the town.

3. You think there should be some regulations?—Yes.

4. Do you think it would inflict hardship to carry out the regulations in the back country?—Yes.

5. In the general carrying-out of the regulations?—Yes.

6. Could you give me any idea of the cost of a shed necessary to comply with these regulations?—Generally, in our district a shed of twenty bails for fifty cows, with a place at the end of the shed for washing hands, with concrete floor, would cost him £100.

7. With 6,000 suppliers that would mean a cost to the farmer of £600,000?—Yes; and that would not include the milk-stand. It is not only your cow-shed: it is your water appliances, pump, tanks, milk-cooler, &c.