

FRIDAY, 20TH JULY, 1923.

THOMAS MARR TIMPANY further examined. (No. 4A.)

1. *Mr. Langstone.*] You said that you had been able to procure an agent outside Tooley Street who handled your produce on much better terms for the company than Tooley Street had given. If that is so, would it not be possible for all the dairy-farmers of New Zealand to act similarly?—In making that statement I did not wish to insinuate that we could make any better arrangements through them than we have made through Tooley Street, but the arrangements have been just as good, if not better. This firm is able to take our products, and handle them continuously if we so desire, and place them consistently on the market to a certain clientele. In doing so we have established a name for our product, and it will always be sold in the same reliable condition.

2. *Hon. Mr. Ngata.*] Are you not a director of the Woodlands Company?—Yes.

3. Are you speaking on your own behalf, or on behalf of the company?—I will answer your question if you are prepared to answer one of mine: Is there any suspicion that I am not authorized to speak on behalf of my company?

4. Well, there is a telegram here from the chairman of the Woodlands Dairy Company stating that they support the Bill. Can you explain that?—Yes, if you are prepared to take the evidence that I gave as conscientious. The position of our company is that our chairman has no authority to say what he stated at a meeting of the South Island Dairy Association. I quite anticipated that this would be done, and I have a right to represent myself as an objector, and to represent the objectors in my company, as opponents of the Bill. My authority for making the statements I do is on far safer ground than the inference you might draw from that telegram. I can assure you that the question has never occurred in our directorate. The previous resolution that was adopted, opposing the Bill, has never been withdrawn with the consent of the directorate or the company.

5. *Mr. Musters.*] Has your company had a meeting of the shareholders to discuss the question?—No—not at any time.

6. Then the shareholders themselves have not passed a resolution either for or against?—They have never been asked.

7. So that you, as a director, are taking up the same attitude as the chairman of directors—expressing your own personal opinion?—Yes.

8. He has no authority from the shareholders to say that the factory is opposed to the Bill?—Absolutely none.

JAMES COTTER examined. (No. 5.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—I am chairman of the Hinuera Co-operative Dairy Company. I am also requested to represent the Morrinsville Co-operative Dairy Company. I am instructed by both boards of directors to oppose the Bill. The following are the grounds on which the dairy-farmers I represent, and with whom I have come in contact, oppose the Bill. First of all, there has never been any indication by the promoters of the Bill, as far as I know, as to how they are going to bring about any reform in the present system for the marketing and shipment of produce. That is a very important point. The only thing which it appears to us that the promoters of the Bill ask, and which the Bill itself asks, is that the dairy-farmers of this country should hand over produce to the value of something like £16,000,000 to a board of directors, which is composed at the present time mainly of men who have for twenty-two years had the opportunity of working out any ideas or schemes they may have had for the betterment of the dairy-farmers of this country, through the National Dairy Association. They have proved that in that respect they have absolutely failed. The National Dairy Association, as far as I know, has done very little, if anything, in the interests of the dairy-farmers of New Zealand. They have stated, in answer to that suggestion, that they had no power—no authority. As far as I can learn, they had the whole of the dairy-farmers of this country behind them, and the dairy-farmers looked to them as the executive body representing them, and supposed to work in their interests. If they had been a live body of men, out for the interests of the dairy-farmers, they would have brought any reforms which they thought necessary before the dairy-farmers. If any legislation was required they could have advocated it, and I feel confident that they would have got whatever support was necessary. Now we find those men who have proved a failure as members of the National Dairy Association coming forward and asking the dairy-farmers to transfer the work which they were supposed to have carried out to the shoulders of this so-called dairy pool, or Dairy Control Board, and still to keep in existence the National Dairy Association. The Committee will see that from the very start they have not indicated that they intend to remove any of the disabilities or any of the concerns which are at present on the backs of the dairy-farmers, in bringing about what they call a reform. They still intend to keep the National Dairy Association going, and I understand that they intend to resolve it into a limited-liability company, dealing in merchandise, or something else that the farmer is not concerned in. I feel confident that nobody present can say that there is anything to indicate how they are going to bring about the so-called reforms in our present system. There is certainly nothing in the Bill, and I have followed Mr. Grounds in his addresses on the subject on several occasions without learning how it is to be done. Mr. Grounds is one of the cleverest speakers I have heard among our dairy-farmers, and I feel confident that if there were any strong points in the possession of the promoters of the Bill, showing advantages that it would gain for the farmer, he would have made the most of them. In my opinion Mr. Grounds has made the most of a very bad case, but not once has he, or any of the promoters of the Bill, indicated by what means any measure of reform is to be brought about. In the early stages of the movement