

That is practically all that will interest the members of the Committee. I was very interested to meet this Mr. Faber, for these things are not generally understood. There are too many going round and saying there is no price-fixing in Denmark, and what is good enough for Denmark is good enough for us here. But if we only had a record of the prices at Home it would be a guide, if we are co-operating with the merchants here, to suggest the prices that should be received. As I mentioned before, I am satisfied that control is absolutely necessary if we are to bring about better shipping arrangements, and, further, be able to regulate the arrival of our goods on the market. It will also help us a great deal to attend to our insurance, to be able to advertise New Zealand goods, to have our Advisory Committee at Home, and our Intelligence Department to see to our price-recording. If we have all these things the market will take care of itself. In dealing with the marketing clauses of the Bill I have heard that many of the factories would be prepared to fall into line if the marketing clauses were eliminated. I understand that the proprietary factories in the South Island would fall into line if the marketing clauses were eliminated. But I would like to see the marketing clauses kept in the Bill. Though I do not think they will be used for many years to come, we like adequate powers in any arrangement we make. We do the same thing with our dairy companies: we draft our memorandum and articles of association, and we provide in them the widest possible powers, and leave it then for one set of men to administer them, and I have never seen an injustice done yet. I think if it applies in the case of articles of association in dairy companies it applies also in this case to the Bill and its marketing clauses. I think we should have wider powers in the Bill, but we should retain these marketing clauses. For the want of control to regulate our produce on the market I maintain that we might lose anything up to £1,000,000 a year. If you take this year, 1s. per hundredweight on our present tonnage is £20,000, and it only requires some 8s. 6d. per hundredweight to run into a million of money. Those are huge figures, but they should be taken into consideration if we are to bring about any improvement at all. Even 1s. per hundredweight is worth working for. We have reached the time when we should stand shoulder to shoulder in the interests of our own industry in the Dominion. I trust that Parliament will support what we believe to be the best working proposition ever placed before the dairy companies of this country.

2. *Mr. Langstone.*] I suppose you have seen by the papers that they are establishing a dairy-control pool in Australia?—Yes, I have heard of it.

3. At the present time you have an agent dealing with your supplies in the Old Country: you do not necessarily deal through Tooley Street?—Oh, yes, we do. But we have the Marketing Association, that handles supplies direct through our agents.

4. You said that you got better prices than through Tooley Street?—As good or better, with the New Zealand Marketing Association.

5. And if you had the lot of the dairy-produce to be dealt with in that way you would still get better results?—We would hope to, when we have some form of holding the market. As we are working to-day we are in competition with Tooley Street.

6. It has been stated previously in evidence that Tooley Street advances up to 90 per cent.: I suppose the farmers could arrange for that to be done through control?—I take it that through control we are going to finance on practically the same lines as we have done in the past, probably through Tooley Street. There is no attempt to eliminate Tooley Street in any shape or form.

7. I suppose that really the best time for our produce to go on the market is during the English winter because there is less competition with other lines of dairy-produce?—Certainly, if we are to regulate it; but I am strongly of opinion that it would pay New Zealand to put our produce on the market in even quantities for at least nine months in the year, and probably for the whole fifty-two weeks. I find that the people in England are very conservative, and therefore once a brand gets on to a market that market demands that brand regularly; if they cannot get it regularly they go off it and on to something else, and then it is hard for that brand to get back on to the market again. I believe that although we may have to take a little less during the English summer, in the aggregate we would be very much better off.

8. *Mr. Burnett.*] You are from Taranaki?—That is so.

9. Have you a wide personal knowledge of the Taranaki dairy-farmer?—I have been for sixteen years representing a dairy company there, with an output of 2,000 tons of cheese, and for thirteen years I have been chairman of that company.

10. Do you travel into the dairying districts of Taranaki?—Yes.

11. You are in close personal touch with the dairy-farmers there?—Yes.

12. You have probably had many arguments with them over this Bill?—Not many arguments.

13. What class of farmer do you find in favour of the Bill?—I do not know that any particular class can be sorted out as being in favour of the Bill. We find that different districts have different conditions—where there is more supporting the Bill than otherwise. You have to consider that in Taranaki we have had strong opposition to the Bill. Mr. Maxwell, who is a very able man, is at the head of it, and he has been responsible for persuading a great many of the dairy-farmers to oppose the proposition—more in North Taranaki than in the south.

14. Why?—I could not say; it seems to be better organized there.

15. Where do you find the fiercest opposition to the movement comes from?—We find that there are several gentlemen taking a strong attitude against the Bill.

16. Is it the proprietary interests?—No; it is the co-operative people who are pushing the opposition.

17. I suppose you have given mature consideration to this statement of yours about the industry losing a cool million as a result of the lack of control?—I believe it is possibly losing a million—that only requires the loss of 8s. 6d. per hundredweight to make a difference of a million a year.

18. Through lack of control?—For lack of better provision for getting our goods on to the market.