

all over New Zealand it would be very difficult to enforce, but if you take section by section it becomes a different matter.

78. The Board would have to take over all the responsibility in connection with standardization, I take it?—Yes.

79. And to see that the fruit was inspected?—Exactly. It depends on the province as to how it is instituted. Nelson would be simple, and Otago very largely would be simple. When I say “simple” I am speaking relatively. As a matter of fact, none of it would be too simple, but it is all possible.

80. *Mr. Corrigan.*] Have you any idea as to the methods of shipping apples from Hobart? Do their apples go near the freezing machinery before they get into the hold of the boat?—In assembling apples in Hobart, where they are brought from outside districts, river-barges and one thing and another are used. The apples are assembled for shipment in big sheds on the wharf, and are not put in cool storage—at least, they used not to be: but there has been a great deal of agitation and a great fight between the Governments of Tasmania and of Victoria with the growers in connection with precooling. All the leaders of the industry are in favour of precooling, but the rank and file are opposed to it, owing to the additional cost. The costs are only relative. If it costs 6d. or 9d. to precool a case of fruit, and if by so doing you can get 2s. 6d. or 2s. extra for that fruit on the market, it is money well spent; but it has been opposed very strenuously in the various Australian States, and the matter is not yet settled.

81. We could practically say that the fruit has never up to the present been cooled by refrigerating machinery until it has been put into the Harbour Board's sheds or put aboard the boat?—No, I would not say that. In previous years certain cooling was done as the fruit was being assembled to meet the boats, but a proper system was not introduced—some fruit was put in cool sheds and some held for a week or so before being sent across. There has been no proper system in Nelson. The practice has been to assemble the fruit at the wharf, or wherever it is shipped, and the refrigeration has taken place after it has gone aboard.

82. *Mr. McKee.*] I understood you to say, Mr. Campbell, that under this scheme of control the public would get their fruit from 50 to 100 per cent. cheaper than at present?—I said I hoped that would be the case.

83. Say 50 per cent. Can you tell me the retail price to-day for Sturmers?—The average price is 6d. per pound.

84. So that if we had control those Sturmers would be sold at 3d.?—You are taking the wrong end of the season.

85. We will take mid-season: what was the average price mid-season for Jonathans or Cox's?—The average price to the grower would be about 2d. per pound.

86. Retail in the shops?—Somewhere about 6d. per pound.

87. Was not the price 4d. per pound in the season right throughout the whole district—in some cases less? I am speaking of mid-season?—Possibly they may have been available for 4d.

88. Suppose 4d.: does that mean that in future the public will get that fruit for 2d.?—That would be 100 per cent. You reduced to 50 per cent. a while ago.

89. Fifty per cent. off 4d. would be 2d.?—Fifty per cent. on 2d. would be 3d. My remarks referred mainly to the margin between what the grower receives and what the consumer pays.

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CHARLES JOHN REAKES, Director of Agriculture, Wellington, examined. (No. 39.)

*Witness:* Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, Mr. Campbell has covered the ground so very fully from a departmental point of view that I feel it is unnecessary I should attempt to go over the same ground again. I may say that I quite agree with his statements. What I would like to say, however, is that during my period of administration of the Department it has become more and more impressed upon my mind that there is a very urgent necessity for a better organization—a more systematic organization—in the fruitgrowing industry than exists at the present time, and that necessity is particularly impressed on me in connection with the marketing end. So far as the production end is concerned, the Department itself, through its staff, is able to give the growers a good deal of advice and assistance and put them in the way of using the best methods for producing their crops. But the marketing end is a matter which necessarily must be dealt with by the growers themselves, and under present conditions I do not consider that the marketing is being done to the best advantage. Naturally, if we are going to have a better system of organization we must have some proper method of control, and this Bill endeavours to provide such a method. One point which, as a departmental officer, I have had to give a great deal of attention to is the extent to which the Government has assisted the industry financially up to now. In one way and another a good deal of money has been utilized for that purpose, and I hope it has done good; but at the same time I have realised that with a better organization of the industry any financial assistance which the Government gives could be utilised to better advantage so far as the individual fruitgrowers are concerned. Take, for instance, our guarantee on overseas shipments of fruit. At the present time we can exercise a certain amount of control through the conditions on which the guarantee is paid: but these conditions deal principally with the grading and packing, and so on, of the fruit. We, naturally, cannot interfere with the actual details of the method under which it is marketed. Therefore, an Export Control Board efficiently administered could be of very great assistance. As far as local control is concerned, I had the experience in my earlier days of running the Department of seeing some very admirably conceived co-operative organizations gradually getting deeper and deeper into financial difficulties, and it was quite obvious