

that these attempts did not meet the requirements of the industry; at any rate, they proved unsuccessful; some carried on, but others went out altogether. The fruitgrowers' federation for quite a long time was open to a good deal of criticism. I am glad to say to-day it is running on very much better lines. Here again the federation has no powers really. It is rather a trading concern, and as such, has been of great assistance to growers in the overseas marketing of their fruit. So far as the local marketing of fruit is concerned, I am quite sure that with an efficient and properly designed organization very great improvements could be brought about, and those improvements would naturally react to the benefit of the grower, and to the benefit of the consumer also. There is another important point in connection with that: with better selling organization and with the lessening of costs between the grower and the consumer, which I believe could be brought about, the lower retail price would greatly increase the consumption of apples in New Zealand itself, and that would be of very great advantage to the growers and to the community as a whole. I have gone very carefully into the whole question of how best to meet the requirements of the industry in the way of better organization, and it seems to me that the provisions contained in this Bill would go a long way towards meeting requirements. I realise, as everybody must realise, that if the Bill became law a very great deal would depend upon the personality of the individuals composing the Export Board, or Local Boards, as the case may be; and one feels that the growers themselves would have that realization also, and would take care to put the right sort of men on their Boards. I might mention also—I am not sure whether it has been brought out in the evidence before—that at the fruitgrowers' conference which was held in June last—the Dominion conference of fruitgrowers—a synopsis of what was proposed to be put in this Bill was submitted to the conference and fully discussed, and I understand that, with the exception of the Otago delegates, who did not vote either way, it was unanimously approved. I understand the Otago delegates took exception—or rather, they wished a provision to be made to prevent what was termed “Dominion pooling.” They also wanted a limit to be put on the amount of the levy. This last was put in the Bill. I think I need not take up the time of the Committee further, seeing the whole question has been very fully gone into by Mr. Capmbell from a departmental standpoint.

1. *Mr. Hudson.*] You say the position in regard to the industry generally is better now than it was?—I said that the fruitgrowers' federation was running on better lines than previously.

2. Can you see any way of getting over the difficulty of private trading, by a clause in the Bill allowing men with business connections now to continue private trading?—It would be very difficult to word a clause to meet the position exactly as one would have it in one's mind.

3. You think that is a matter that would have to be left absolutely in the hands of the Board to use its own discrimination?—Yes, I am afraid that would have to be the case.

4. Is there any way of providing for permits being allowed to certain individuals to continue their present business, if such business were seen to be not against the interests of the industry?—You would simply be putting into the Bill a power which would already be in the hands of the Board. The Board could exercise complete control or limited control, and the Bill allows for that.

5. *Mr. Forbes.*] Is one of the reasons why you welcome this Bill because it would take the industry out of the Department's hands: is that why the Department is backing it?—I am not wanting to shirk any responsibilities.

6. I mean financially. What did the Government do in connection with manures a while ago?—They provided about £6,000 by way of loan to assist growers in the Nelson Province to buy manures.

7. Have you been paid?—Not yet.

*Hon. Mr. Nosworthy:* It was on the deferred-payment system.

8. *Mr. Forbes.*] Are they keeping up their payments—are they able to?—Some are.

9. From what we can gather from the evidence you will have to write off a considerable amount?—We are always hopeful.

10. You want to place the industry in a stronger position than it is in at present in regard to the Government and its assistance?—I want to place the industry in a position to be more self-supporting in carrying out its general business, and so that any assistance the Government gives can be utilized to even better advantage than at present.

11. You think the guarantee has been of considerable assistance to them?—Undoubtedly.

12. You think it will be continued?—I hope it will not be necessary to continue it for a long time to come.

*Hon. Mr. Nosworthy:* That is a matter of policy.

13. *Mr. Forbes.*] In connection with the reception of the Bill in Otago and Canterbury, you mentioned it was agreed to—the synopsis was sent down and there was no very strong opposition to it. It was discussed pretty freely, but the resolution supporting it was carried, I believe, without any dissentient voices, except that the Otago representatives did not vote at all. Do you gather from the evidence submitted to the Committee that the position has altered in both those places since then?—It seems to have done so.

14. As far as the local marketing is concerned in Otago and Canterbury, do you think the same dissatisfaction exists among growers there as in Nelson? The market is in a state of chaos: does that apply in Otago and Canterbury?—I have not heard of the same thing happening in Otago and Canterbury, but naturally the Otago and Canterbury growers are in a better position to market their fruit than the Nelson growers, seeing they have no sea carriage necessary before they can get it to the market.

15. Do you not think that points to the fact that they lose the direct control by having to send it across the water, and they cannot follow as easily as the other growers? Do you feel that is why the