

1909.
NEW ZEALAND.

EXCESSIVE MOISTURE IN BUTTER

(CORRESPONDENCE IN CONNECTION WITH PROSECUTION FOR).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives dated the 28th October, 1909.

Ordered, "That there be laid before this House copies of all correspondence between the Department of Agriculture and the New Zealand Dairy Association (Limited), of Auckland, in connection with the recent prosecution for alleged excessive moisture in butter."—(Mr. GREENSLADE.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

SIR,—

22nd November, 1909.

With reference to your letter of the 29th September in connection with the relations between your association and the Department of Agriculture, I have now the honour to inform you that your letter has been submitted to Mr. D. Cuddie, Director of the Dairy-produce Division of the Department, who, after going very fully into all the matters to which you referred, has prepared a report, dated the 17th instant, a copy of which I attach hereto.

After inquiring very thoroughly into the several allegations contained in your letter, I am of opinion that your association is wrong in concluding that you have been unfairly treated by the Department.

I have, &c.,

THOS. MACKENZIE,

Minister of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce,
and Tourist and Health Resorts.

Wesley Spragg, Esq.,

Managing Director, New Zealand Dairy Association, Auckland.

Department of Agriculture, Dairy Division,

Wellington, 17th November, 1909.

With reference to the voluminous memorandum (together with copies of numerous letters) addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture, Commerce, and Tourists, by Mr. Wesley Spragg, managing director, New Zealand Dairy Association (Limited), on the 29th September last, I beg to submit the following answers to the charges contained therein, and preferred against Mr. Thornton, Dairy-produce Grader at Auckland:—

1. *Re* loss of £100 to New Zealand Dairy Association by having shipment of butter refrozen in Wellington in 1897: With regard to this charge, I would point out that Mr. Spragg has been repeatedly informed that Mr. Thornton was in no way responsible for this consignment of butter being rejected from shipment: and yet he (Mr. Spragg) has continued to repeat the charge both privately and in his position as managing director of the New Zealand Dairy Association, and has referred to it from the platform when meeting his shareholders. As a matter of fact, at the time this occurred Mr. Spragg was written to by the Secretary for Agriculture, who informed him that the butter was refused by the engineers of the s.s. "Ruapehu" owing to its soft condition. The following is a copy of a letter addressed to Captain Rose, of the New Zealand Shipping Company, by the Secretary for Agriculture, on the subject:—

"Wellington, 20th April, 1897.

"Memorandum for Captain Rose, New Zealand Shipping Company, Wellington.

"RE shipment of butter *ex* 'Rotomahana.'

"In a letter from Mr. Spragg on the subject of the rejection of the above when offered for transhipment by the 'Ruapehu' he writes as follows:—

"'You say the ship's people refused to take it. Such action on the part of the shipping company would be contrary to all our previous experience, while your present letter, in the passage which I have already quoted, says your Grader judged "that it was not in a fit condition to ship." There is no shadow of doubt that it was upon this judgment—formed, to say the least, without

proper care—that action was taken; and the testimony of Mr. Heaton is that Captain Rose and the engineer of the “Ruapehu” gave this as their reason: “They could not ship the butter against the instructions of the Government Inspector.”

“I have explained to Mr. Spragg that we have no power to prevent the shipment of any produce, and that it rested with the officers of the boat to take it or not. From our conversation of to-day I understand the engineer acted solely on his own responsibility, and that you will continue to refuse all butter arriving in an unfrozen condition.

“I shall be glad if you will kindly give me this in writing.

“JOHN D. RITCHIE, Secretary.”

The reply from Captain Rose is as follows:—

“SIR,—

“Wellington, 26th April, 1897.

“In reply to your memorandum of the 20th instant *re* butter *ex* ‘Rotomahana’ for transhipment to the ‘Ruapehu,’ I beg to state that the chief engineer examined the butter on board the ‘Rotomahana,’ and found it too soft for shipment, and declined to take it, as it would not be possible to freeze it hard on board the steamer. I may say that all our engineers are refusing to take butter on board unless properly frozen, as they get the blame of any damage for so doing.

“I have, &c.,

“HENRY ROSE, Local Manager.

“The Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Wellington.”

This letter in itself is proof positive that the charge made against Mr. Thornton is absolutely without foundation. The letter is conclusive, but, in addition, I may point out that the landing of butter from Auckland in a frozen condition in Wellington, if carried down the east coast as ordinary cargo, more especially under the conditions of freezing and carriage existing in 1897, would be an impossibility, as has been proved by subsequent experience.

The only part Mr. Thornton could have taken in the transaction was to check the temperatures—a duty devolving upon him as an official of the Department.

2. Mr. Spragg states that the New Zealand Dairy Association has been “subjected by him (Thornton) to a series of generally small annoyances to the hurt of our business.”

Since Mr. Thornton took up his duties in Auckland as Grader in Charge, he has found it necessary on several occasions to request the New Zealand Dairy Association to comply with the regulations under the Dairy Industry Act. Mr. Spragg endeavoured to overawe the Grader in Auckland, and has not refrained from hinting that he had political influence which he could command. Excessive latitude having been allowed shippers (especially the New Zealand Dairy Association) before Mr. Thornton went to Auckland, the much-needed change was, when given effect to, apparently treated by Mr. Spragg as an unfriendly move directed especially against his company. This interpretation of the policy of the Department put Mr. Thornton in a very invidious position. Mr. Thornton, however, has not insisted on the strict compliance with the letter of the law, and has endeavoured to meet the shippers as far as is consistent with the best interests of the industry.

As showing the willingness of this officer to meet the wishes of the association, it may be mentioned that he has frequently attended the company’s depot in Auckland to assist them in classing certain special butters—a voluntary act on his part, and not a portion of his duty. In addition to this, he has, since his arrival in Auckland, attended the company’s private stores to grade tinned butter. Had he been antagonistically inclined, he could have insisted on this produce being delivered in the ordinary grading-store, which would have been more inconvenient and costly to the company.

3. Letter A to Mr. Ritchie is met by the information contained in the letter from the shipping company. A 1 shows how Mr. Spragg endeavoured to use the influence of the Press to assist him in opposing even the Secretary for Agriculture in connection with any contemplated change. It may be mentioned that this opposition has ever been felt by the Department and the Dairy Division in particular. This is further evidenced in—

4. Letter B. The text of this letter is found in these words: “I am now in receipt of a note from him (Thornton) saying that on your (Mr. Kinsella’s) instructions, all tinned butter for the South Sea islands must be inspected and graded.” This letter has been included as evidence against Thornton, although in point it evidences Mr. Spragg’s opposition to any change, although such change was merely bringing the carrying-out of the work in Auckland into line with the routine at other grading ports. The opposition of the shippers and factories at all the other grading ports combined has been less than that offered by Mr. Spragg alone. Letter B 1 would indicate that Mr. Spragg continued to oppose the grading of his tinned butter until the Department threatened to take steps to enforce the law in this respect. The grading of tinned butter was being done in Wellington, and with no opposition. These letters refer more to the action of the Department, or the Dairy Commissioner, than to Thornton.

5. Letter C bears on Thornton’s judgment of quality. The reports on quality from London are frequently misleading, and are often merely an indication of market conditions. Good reports follow good markets, and *vice versa*. I know Thornton’s judgment was not severe on the quality of the butter of the New Zealand Dairy Association when grading. Although Mr. Spragg in letter C states that the butter from Ngaruawahia was “practically condemned by Thornton,” our office records show that for the season referred to (1905–6) butter from the Ngaruawahia Factory graded *considerably above the minimum* for first grade—viz., 2·41 points, the average grade being 90·41 points, whereas the minimum for first grade is 88 points.

6. Letter D refers to a shipment of butter. This butter, even if stored for local use, should have been graded before freezing. A large concern is seldom sure whether they will sell locally or export. An example of Mr. Spragg’s demands is shown in his asking the Grader to accept, as a sample of a further shipment, a number of boxes he (the Grader) had examined for a previous

shipment, stating that one sample was representative of the whole. To extend this, Mr. Spragg might with as much evidence of fact claim this sample to be representative of their whole output. In the third sentence of letter D it will be seen that any slip or mistake on Mr. Spragg's part is an inadvertence, while from the general correspondence any so-called mistake on the part of the Department he terms an unfriendly action aimed against his company.

7. Letters E, E 1, E 2 are dealing with an instance wherein Mr. Spragg asked to be permitted to ship butter without it being the regulation time in the freezing-chamber. Although Mr. Thornton had no power to authorise this, on the advice of the Secretary for Agriculture the concession was allowed, under the following specified condition: "This to be without prejudice to future shipments, when we will expect you (Mr. Spragg) to conform to regulation time in freezer as other shippers do."

It may be pointed out that the general principle that all butter should be properly frozen is recognised by all in the dairy business; but, notwithstanding this, many shippers would at times like to get unfrozen butter away, depending on all the other butter shipped being sufficiently frozen to reduce the temperature of the warmer. The warmer butter raises the temperature of the colder, and the principle of shipping nothing but properly frozen butter cannot, in justice to all, be departed from. It has been difficult to get Mr. Spragg to come into line in this respect.

8. Letter F contains a charge that Thornton was responsible for short-shipping one lot of Pukekohe butter. Thornton states that he informed the secretary of the association that "its being included would all depend on the time it arrives." It has been reported that this butter did not arrive sufficiently early for the freezing-works to handle it the evening of the closing date, and that it was unloaded the following morning. The freezing-works are entirely responsible for such unloading. With regard to Thornton's action, I may quote from my letter to Mr. Spragg dated the 20th October, 1908:—

"Seeing that the conversation about the matter took place between Mr. Pacey and Mr. Thornton about twelve days prior to the date of closing for this shipment, it is not surprising that a difference of opinion should now crop up as to what was actually said on this occasion.

"As it is, I have nothing to go upon, except a copy of Mr. Pacey's letter to the Grader on the one hand, and a letter from Mr. Thornton on the other. What is said by one is contradicted in the other to some extent; therefore it seems to me that there is some ground for the contention that no definite arrangements were made regarding the butter which was expected would arrive by this particular train."

9. *Re Onewhero amalgamation*: The only evidence Mr. Spragg has advanced against the conduct of Messrs. Thornton and Shirley at the Onewhero Factory is that contained in a letter addressed to the New Zealand Dairy Association's secretary by a Mr. Miller, in letter marked G 1. Although (evidently under pressure) Mr. Miller states, "In thinking the matter over a few days afterwards I came to the conclusion that they came up with the express purpose of putting in a word for Mr. Brown and putting in a word against the amalgamation," he further qualifies such general charge by saying that "the plan they took and the statements they made would, I believe, exonerate them."

It will be noted that it was only after a lapse of "a few days" that Mr. Miller came to this conclusion as stated, which surely proves that these officers could not have taken any active measures or made any very strong statements against the interests of the New Zealand Dairy Association's business. That these officers were guarded is evidenced by Mr. Miller in his statement to the effect that Mr. Thornton "said he wished it particularly understood that he was not antagonistic to Mr. Spragg or the New Zealand Dairy Association, and had not come to try to persuade me (Mr. Miller) one way or the other." As stated in Mr. Spragg's covering letter, representations were at the time made to the then Minister for Agriculture and the Dairy Commissioner. The Minister asked that certain inquiries should be made, and as the result of these he wrote to the Secretary for Agriculture, regarding Messrs. Thornton and Shirley's action, that "I quite accept their statements that they did not visit the place with the intention of interfering in the business arrangements with the factory-suppliers." While the Minister agreed that Messrs. Thornton and Shirley had not acted wrongly in regard to their interview with the milk-suppliers of the Onewhero Company, he did, however, take exception to the tone of their replies when referring to the accusation made against them. No doubt the officers felt very strongly that they were being falsely accused and maligned; therefore, under such circumstances some allowance has to be made for the tone in which they refuted the groundless charge, implying as it did that they had used their influence with a view to damaging Mr. Spragg's company.

10. Pages 4 to 6 of Mr. Spragg's letter—Thornton's "manifest animus" in connection with the recent prosecution: Mr. Thornton had nothing whatever to do with instituting the proceedings against the company beyond authorising the carrying-out of a suggestion advanced by the Assistant Grader to the effect that a sample for analysis should be taken from the box of butter. Further, he could not know, until this butter was analysed and reported on from New Plymouth, that it really contained an excessive percentage of moisture. It was not until after the association was informed by me that proceedings would be taken that Thornton received information regarding prosecution. Had Mr. Thornton intimated his suspicions regarding the excessive water content of this butter to Mr. Spragg, as Mr. Spragg contends he should have done, it is possible that the butter might have been withdrawn. Had subsequent analyses proved these suspicions unfounded, it is reasonable to infer, judging by past experience, that Mr. Spragg would not lose such an opportunity of complaining of further unjustifiable interference with and animosity against his company.

11. Publicity of the news *re* pending prosecution: On page 5 of Mr. Spragg's letter he makes the following statement—"In the first place intimation of the full text of the charge against my

company was given to the riff-raff of the streets and to the newspapers for publication before we ourselves knew it"; and he alleges that Mr. Thornton was responsible for the publicity; but the information was not given out by that officer.

12. Mr. Spragg takes exception to a prosecution being instituted against his company "on such an unquestionably accidental incident, and to such a small quantity (one box of a season's make of nearly 80,000 boxes)." The facts of the case are as follows:—

The New Zealand Dairy Association ship butter under two principal brands—viz., "Dairy" and "Anchor"—and the moisture content of this butter has always been found well within the legal limit. The butter on which the prosecution was based was not packed under the company's brand, but marked "No. 109." Of the total of some 80,000 boxes shipped during the season, 3,501 were shipped under "No. 109." Mr. Spragg has explained that the quality shipped under "No. 109" is inferior to that of the principal brands, and that this special lot was primarily intended for the local market. The major portion of the quantity shipped under this brand was consigned to South Africa, a surplus being exported to London. Of these boxes exported under "No. 109" within a period of two months a total of three samples was taken, the analysis of each showing a moisture content beyond the legal limit. It was only on the third case that a prosecution was instituted.

To summarise:—The complaint made by Mr. Spragg against Mr. Thornton in letter A, and confirmed in the editorial of the *Auckland Star* (A 1), is in fact against (1) the action of the engineer (at the time) of the s.s. "Ruapehu," and (2) the Secretary for Agriculture for an expression of dissatisfaction with the carrying-out of the freezing and coastal shipping of butter from Auckland. It is submitted that Mr. Thornton's name should not have been imported into this controversy, and that in doing so Mr. Spragg has done an injustice to Mr. Thornton.

The complaints included in B, B 1, are in fact directed against the policy of the Department in grading tinned butter. It is submitted that Mr. Thornton's duty was to carry out his instructions, and that he cannot reasonably be blamed for any portion of the Department's policy meeting with Mr. Spragg's disapproval.

The complaint of letter C, regarding Mr. Thornton's judgment of the New Zealand Dairy Association's butter, is couched in language which misrepresents the facts. Instead of the Ngauruahia butter being, as Mr. Spragg says, "practically condemned," our records show that the average quality of this brand for the season referred to was judged by the Grader, and pointed by him, a good first-class grade, with 90.41 points.

The complaints of letters D, E, E 1, E 2, are against the policy of the Department and regulations of the Dairy Industry Act. These are evidences of the disposition of Mr. Spragg to demand treatment more favoured than that meted out to other shippers, or than provided for by the regulations of the Dairy Industry Act.

The subject of the charge made in letters F, F 1, F 2, F 3 has evidently been the result of a misunderstanding, and, after considering all the evidence obtainable bearing on this, it is extremely doubtful whether there is any justification for this complaint.

The charge dealt with in G, G 1, and G 2 magnifies any ground for complaint (if there were any) in this connection. It is submitted that Messrs. Thornton and Shirley are exonerated by statements contained in Mr. Miller's letter, and it is further submitted that the then Minister of Agriculture, after making inquiry, was satisfied that the major portion of the charge was without foundation. Subsequent events show that the amalgamation of the Onewhero Dairy Company with the New Zealand Dairy Association was effected.

The complaint *re* the prosecution of the New Zealand Dairy Association for "excessive moisture" is surely unjustified. Within two months, three samples of the company's butter were found to contain an excessive amount of moisture, and only on the third offence were proceedings taken.

D. CUDDIE,

Director of Dairy-produce.

The Secretary of Agriculture, Commerce, and Tourists.

The New Zealand Dairy Association, Head Office,

DEAR SIR,—

Wellesley Street, Auckland, N.Z., 13th November, 1909.

I am thus far without reply to mine addressed to you on the 29th September, excepting for a brief acknowledgment of its receipt. Will you favour me with your reply to my representations and the applications which I made.

Trusting for an immediate and favourable response,

I am, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,

Hon. Thomas Mackenzie, Minister of Agriculture, Wellington.

Managing Director.

DEAR SIR,—

Auckland, 29th September, 1909.

I respectfully submit for your consideration some facts in connection with our business and its contact with your Department, and I further respectfully request that you will seek to give my company's business such redress as will prevent a repetition of the disadvantages complained of.

In setting out my complaints, I shall take the opportunity of briefly advising you that in itself and in its incorporate (Reynolds and Co., Limited), the New Zealand Dairy Association

(Limited), now a co-operative concern, was the pioneer of the present successful factory-dairying system of the Dominion.

Twenty-five years ago many struggling settlers were making an effort to eke out existence with the best market they could find for their ill-made butter, returning them an average of 4d. per pound. A few unsuccessful efforts to deal with dairy-produce on factory lines had been made, but up to that time all had failed hopelessly and disastrously. It was then that I took up the business, first as manager of a department of the old Auckland Fresh Food and Storage Company. When this company passed through stress, I succeeded in interesting other capital to continue the dairy portion of it. From that time to the present, through its several changes, this company has continued the work without cessation. In the interval we have manufactured and exported more butter than any company in the Dominion. Our disbursements last season in connection with butter alone were nearly a quarter of a million sterling. Our business has never taken a backward step during all the years. As a proprietary it met all its engagements through good seasons and seasons of disaster alike, and for twenty-five years it has fostered settlement probably beyond what has been done by any other single institution in New Zealand. In its various forms, and, finally, under its present co-operative character, its history has been one which I, who have had continuous charge of it, review with satisfaction; and I am glad of the happy accident which placed me in the position to so assist in making our country and our people prosperous.

After the struggles of the early and more critical period of the dairying business were over, and when it was sufficiently established to insure its continuance, the Government Dairy Department was organized. I have no present recollection of our company having received any valued assistance from that Department, although our relations with it have, in the main, been of a pleasant nature. I, however, readily testify that, in my opinion, it has been exceedingly useful in the case of very many small factories, especially in more remote districts where opportunities of getting information respecting modern dairying were either not as available or perhaps as regularly made use of as with ourselves and other more advanced companies. In such cases the measure of education which your Department has been able to give has done much to create and to preserve the reputation which the dairy-produce of the Dominion now enjoys. I also take this opportunity of acknowledging that many of the officers of your Department have been qualified, competent, and judicious in the pursuance of their duties. I am sorry to say that, as far as my company is concerned, there has been one marked exception to the rule. I refer to the present Chief Grader stationed in Auckland—Mr. A. Thornton. Without attempting to account for Thornton's unfriendly attitude and actions towards my company, I want, as briefly as I may, to indicate to you the manner in which these have been hurtful to the interests of the important section of the Dominion's dairy industry which I represent and control.

My company's first contact with Thornton as an official of your Department was in 1897. At that time the butter-export business of Auckland was struggling to its feet. My company was then the only important representative of the now thriving industry here. At that time Thornton, who was Grader at Wellington, put my struggling company to a needless expense of £100, in the face of circumstances which would have suggested to a wiser or more considerate man that it was entitled to the fullest assistance of the Department which he represented. I am attaching copies of letters referring to this incident, and also copy of an article by the *Auckland Star* referring to it. These are marked respectively "A" and "A1." These will explain the incident in full. The outline of it is that, owing to mishaps to the shipping, the freezing-stores of Auckland and New Plymouth were full of delayed butter waiting for shipment. Our own little company had about 70 tons in freezing-store—a considerable accumulation at that time. Being at the terminal point, we had first claim upon space in the west-coast steamers, which offered the best and most direct way of getting Auckland frozen butter to the Home-going vessel in Wellington; but I learned that if my company insisted upon its acknowledged claim to occupy the space it would shut out the butter which was lying at Taranaki, which, like our own, had been delayed in shipment. Upon representations from the agent of the Union Steamship Company at Auckland, we gave up the "Takapuna" space for the accommodation of the Taranaki butter, and ourselves used the longer east-coast route, which was, of course, not available for the Taranaki people. Our butter was specially frozen to resist the longer carriage, and reached Wellington in splendid condition. Naturally, a small quantity of the shipment which lay just underneath the hatchways was raised in temperature. This was not sufficient to hurt it, but it was taken advantage of by an inconsiderate or antagonistic official as a pretext to send the whole of our 70 tons of butter to the Wellington freezer to be refrozen, and to thus impose upon my company a fine of £100 for having given up the "Takapuna" space for the relief of the distressed industry in Taranaki.

Our next contact with Thornton was upon his appointment as Grader to the Auckland Depot, since when we have been subjected by him to a series of generally small annoyances and obstructions, to the hurt of our business. Thus, on the 7th November, 1905, I had occasion to write to Mr. Kinsella, who was at the time Dairy Commissioner, complaining of want of consideration and assistance such as had been previously given to all the companies and firms here by Thornton's predecessors (see copies of letters to Mr. Kinsella marked "B" and "B1," attached).

Copy of letter marked "C" indicates what we have all along considered the unfair or incompetent judgment of our produce by Thornton. This is not and has not been a matter of importance to my company, although it has been an annoyance to our factory-manager.

Copy of letter marked "D" indicates Thornton's indisposition to facilitate business. This is an example of the pinprick order of obstruction, and is not important enough to be elaborated.

Copies of letters "E," "E1," and "E2," addressed to the Dairy Commissioner, refer to a further obstruction by Thornton which was at once removed on application to Wellington.

Copies of letters "F," "F1," "F2," and "F3" disclose what appears to be a deliberately hurtful obstruction, and violation, without explanation or apology, of an arrangement which

was in accordance with previous practice, and which in the case referred to had just been agreed to by Thornton. To any one acquainted with the business the desirability of getting all that is possible of our manufacture forward by the first opportunity, so as to catch the more favourable early market, is quite understood. A delay of a fortnight in certain seasons may make a difference of £10 or so per ton upon the sale of butter, hence our anxiety not to be baulked by trivialities and red-tapeism in our effort to include the last ton possible in shipments. Prior to Thornton being placed in charge at Auckland we never had occasion to complain of want of consideration from a local Grader, nor, I think, had they ever occasion to feel that we were asking from the Department anything that it ought not to do either for us or for anybody else in the business.

These briefly referred-to cases will serve as samples of the lesser although sufficiently important obstructions of which I complain.

Throughout practically the whole of the time from the date of Thornton's arrival in Auckland reports were frequently brought to me that Thornton, and subsequently his associate Dairy Instructor, Shirley, were using their influence to the injury of my company's reputation and the extension of its operations. By virtue of their office, opinions which they expressed and advice which they gave would naturally carry weight altogether out of proportion to its actual value as based upon the knowledge which they possessed. This influence, I have said, we were constantly hearing was being used to the detriment of my company. A definite case of this kind was brought under my notice in an attempt by Thornton and Shirley to interfere between my company and the Onewhero Co-operative Dairy Company. The facts are set out in copies of letters which I attach, addressed to the Dairy Commissioner and the Minister, for the time, of the Department, and in a copy of a letter from Mr. Miller, of Onewhero, which was also sent for the information of the Department. These are marked respectively "G," "G 1," and "G 2." I think it will be difficult for you to come to any other conclusion than that a deliberate and, in case of one of them, a wicked attempt was made by Thornton and Shirley to injure my company's business and to prevent the contemplated amalgamation. I look upon this incident, because it affords proof in a single case of what was frequently reported as the practice of these men, as being a very important matter for your consideration.

I shall, further on, place on record the recent incident of your Department's prosecution of my company for alleged breach of the Dairy Act which resulted in the dismissal of the charge by the presiding Magistrate, but I wish now to call your attention to the manifest animus exhibited by Thornton in connection with this case. For the present I pass over the omission to call my company's attention to the condition of the butter in question. On the face of it, it would appear to most people that, placed in charge of the Auckland end of a Department whose duty it is to protect the reputation of New Zealand butter, it was his duty, by any reasonable and lawful means within his command, to prevent butter which, in his opinion, was likely to damage the Dominion's industry from leaving our shores. I am informed that he had no specific powers to do so, but I respectfully submit that it was easily within his province to have notified my company of his suspicions and intention to have the butter in question analysed, to have invited our inspection, and suggested that we should take samples to check his Department's analysis.

It is doubtless now within your knowledge that the complaint referred to one box of an irregular lot of ten boxes of butter, marked separately and distinctly from the 3,150 boxes under our standard brands which went to London by the same vessel, and that there was not and never has been a suspicion of fault, or carelessness, or otherwise in connection with these standard brands.

It may further be within your knowledge that the local Graders of your Department are furnished with appliances with which they can at least roughly determine the amount of moisture in a given sample of butter, so that within a reasonable time—say, within from two to twenty-four hours—such notice as would have been likely to protect the industry by causing the withdrawal of the suspected butter might have been given to my office. To ordinary people having in mind the supposed duties of your Dairying Department, it would appear that Thornton was guilty either of gross neglect of duty, or of intention to entrap in such a manner as to make any offence which might be proven to appear the more heinous, because I assume that, although the law provides equal punishment for "attempting to export" illegal butter as for actually exporting, it is probable that a Magistrate would take into account any prompt action to withdraw the offending goods from sale. To me, Thornton's action in this case appears to have been dictated by some feeling against either my company or myself which made him careless as to any injury which might finally result to the reputation of the Dominion through what he believed was faulty butter going to the English market. I have since learned to my surprise, and I think it will be a surprise to all to hear of it, that Thornton's action in this particular had the approval of the senior officers of the Department. Such being the case, thus far he can only be charged with utilising authorised means for continuing the policy of annoyance and hurt to my company which I have previously described.

I now want to call your attention to the marked evidences of his personal hostility in the conduct of the case in which he acted as his Department's representative. In the first place, intimation of the full text of the charge against my company was given to the riff-raff of the streets and to the newspapers for publication before we ourselves knew of it. This publication of allegations since declared unproven going forward unqualified by any statement of our side of the case was liable to have, and for the time did have, a seriously damaging influence. This, I am afraid, was so intended by the person who gave the details. I assume that only Thornton, acting for the Department, and Mays, the Crown Solicitor's assistant, would possess this information. Mays has since said that he did not give any one the details in question. I am therefore left to the conclusion that it was supplied by Thornton.

On the second occasion of the case being called we had, by arrangement with Mays, and upon his suggestion, agreed to admit technical guilt on the plea of inadvertence. Mays had informed

us that he was instructed by the Department to agree to such a plea, and to consent to the dismissal of the charge if the Magistrate was so minded. My approval of this arrangement was due to what has since proven to be an erroneous supposition: that as we had not had an opportunity of taking a sample of the butter in question, and therefore could not prove an absolute negative to the charge, we had, as the law stood, no redress, and that, whether we were in the wrong or not, we were entirely in the hands of the Department. On this occasion Thornton, in person, in direct violation of the arrangement which Mays had made, sought to connect up the alleged fault of the box in question with other shipments of our butter, in such a manner as to make it appear that much of our manufacture was open to question. I was not present, but I am informed by our company's secretary and our solicitor, Mr. Hanna, that this was done with so much eagerness that he was checked by the Magistrate. This was in absolute contradiction of fact as Thornton knew it, and in unjustifiably ignorant, if not malicious, confusion of "free" moisture, such as our butter shows, and "excessive" moisture, an altogether different thing, which we have taken unlimited pains to see that our butter never contains.

Prior to the third occasion of the case being called, at an interview which I had with Mr. Mays, at his request, he informed me that he had been told by the Department that "he had exceeded his instructions" at the previous hearing. He then desired that we should again agree to enter a technical plea of "Guilty," and said he would inform the Magistrate that the case was exceptional and purely accidental, and, further, would indicate to the Court his willingness that the case should be dismissed or that only a nominal conviction should be recorded, we to pay expenses. To this I replied with some warmth, that the question of fine or of costs was not a matter of concern to me—that the amount of any money involved, whether it was much or little, was not to be considered in the case; that I was concerned solely for the reputation of my company, and that, as the Department had already by its action and through his conduct of the case done the utmost it was capable of doing to injure my company, I had no terms to make with him. I told him there were two courses open—either to withdraw the charge or to fight it out. I was subsequently informed by our solicitor, Mr. Hanna, that Mays had received instructions to withdraw the charge, we to pay the costs. This latter I refused to agree to, but Mr. Hanna informed me that he had misunderstood my reference to fine and costs, and promised Mays that we would pay.

You have doubtless learned that, with your instructions in his hand, Mays put such a damaging construction upon the Department's action as to cause the Magistrate to refuse to allow him to withdraw the case. You will also know that when, owing to your solicitor having no evidence to offer, the charge was dismissed, that it was again reinstated at our request, and was finally dismissed upon the facts.

I now respectfully submit that, after making the most ample allowance which should be made for the individuality of an official, my company has, through Thornton, suffered more injury than it ought to be called upon to suffer at the pleasure of any Government Department; and I further respectfully submit that Thornton should be removed from the position in Auckland which has given him power to inflict injuries upon my company.

While writing, and because I have had occasion to refer at some length to your Department's recent prosecution of my company, I desire to place on record for your information and guidance further facts connected with the case. This is rendered necessary because of misunderstandings which, perhaps ignorantly and, as I have indicated, perhaps intentionally, have been imported into it.

I have already said, and want to repeat with emphasis, that a law against excessive moisture in butter, either for export or for local sale, is a just law, and that the legal limit of 16 per cent. is quite high enough, and that any wilful infringement of such a law should be checked rigorously. I do not want there to be any misunderstanding as to my attitude towards a sound law, which stands for the protection of our own company and of the industry of the Dominion.

As briefly as I can state it, the fuller case and its connections is as follows:—

On the 16th December we were advised by the Dairy Commissioner that a sample of our butter had been tested by the Department, and had shown 16·17 per cent. of moisture. Sixteen per cent. is the legal limit, and 16·90 is, I think, the minimum at which prosecutions take place. The difference between the 16 per cent. and the 16·90 per cent. is, I understand, allowed for possible errors in sampling and testing. The butter in question was referred to as "Pukekohe" butter. Butter manufactured at our Pukekohe factory is branded with the words "New Zealand Dairy Association, Limited," in concentric circles. This constitutes our "Dairy" or "Association" brand, one of our standard brands. I am enclosing herewith, marked "H," a copy of my letter dated the 19th December in reply to one of the 16th from Mr. Cuddie. It will show you the spirit in which I received that letter. It is true that I was absolutely incredulous about our butter containing excessive moisture, for I felt, as Mr. Cuddie has since said, that it would seem to be a practical impossibility for our men to make butter on the lines that we had regularly adopted and leave as much moisture as 16 per cent. in it. We were regularly testing our butter with proper appliances, without getting indication of excess or even dangerous approach to the legal limit. This was being done daily at the factory, where the practice had been carried out continuously for the previous six years, so that we were not being careless. In addition to this we had check tests made (see list attached, "I"), some by myself, some by the testing-officers at the factories, whose sole duties are connected with the testing-room. These checks confirmed our factory-manager's tests. In further addition, and to make everything in connection with this department beyond question, we had also gone to the expense of getting our butter analysed occasionally by Mr. Pond, Dominion Analyst. His returns finally confirmed all our own work.

We had no further complaint beyond this first of the 16th December until the 23rd February, which was the date when we were notified of suspected breach of Dairy Regulations, upon which

your Department subsequently took action. It was then, for the first time, that we were advised that the butter complained of was a small lot branded "No. 109." This lot of butter had no other brand on it to connect it with our business. Had information been given to us in December that it was the "No. 109" which was suspected, as I think it should have been, that brand would naturally have been more carefully watched by us. I am personally more interested than your Department is in avoiding sending anything to England which is likely to do our business harm, and I take it as an unfriendly thing that your Department, either by its Graders or anybody else, withheld information which it might easily have given, and which might have prevented risks occurring. To me it appears as if the information was withheld for the purpose of preventing me from investigating, and, if need be, withdrawing the butter from shipment. The butter in question was in the Grader's hands on the 13th February. I received information of its alleged defects on the 25th, twelve days afterwards. Mr. Cuddie's letter was dated 23rd. If reasonably prompt intimation had been given we could at once have withdrawn the suspected boxes from shipment. This would have been easier for us than having, upon the belated information of the suspicions of your Department, to instruct our English agents to withdraw them from sale on reaching England. Mr. Cuddie's explanation, which is doubtless the real one, is that he was absent from his office; although I do not recognise that as a sufficient reason why the alleged defect was not intimated to me by some one as soon as it was suspected. We received the Commissioner's suggestion that we should ourselves take samples for independent analysis when the butter was actually on its way to England.

It remains for me to say that your Commissioner, Mr. Cuddie, was informed of all the facts as here set forth in a personal interview which I had with him; and to add that my company, the pioneer of the industry, has so manifestly sought to safeguard the industry's interests in every particular that, had the charge referred to actually been true, it related to such an unquestionably accidental incident, and to such a small quantity (one box of a season's make of nearly eighty thousand boxes), that a prosecution based upon it must appear to any one as at least unwise and recklessly unfair. It is possible that a mischance might occur in any business—our own or any other company's—so as to create a technical breach of the law. I understand that doctors, lawyers, editors, and all sorts of wise people are not exempted from this risk.

My company's operations extend over, roughly, a hundred miles by fifty miles of country. I have sixty separate stations to control within that area, and I have to look after 175 persons whom we employ. If you will call to memory your own experience in trying to keep errors from creeping in, even where the whole of the business in hand may be directly under your own sight, you will understand that, situated as I am, I look for possible mishaps to take place. A purely accidental mishap I can overlook; but if I have reason to know that a fault is due either to intentional wickedness or serious carelessness, I am not in the habit of accepting excuses. I commend this attitude for your Department's consideration.

I should further like to make strong representations that, where your officers have reason to suspect excessive moisture in butter prepared for export, such butter should be set aside by them, and the owner advised, so that he may at least have an opportunity of withdrawing it. Indeed, I should approve of exportation being prohibited.

In closing, I call your attention to the harassing influence of your Department's action, and the great waste of time for which it has been responsible. Apart from injury to our brand and our business, which I do not now attempt to assess, the value of the time and other expenditure of my company which has been directly involved has been at least £200. I should be glad if in some manner you could see your way to compensate us for this waste which has been caused by your Department.

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

The Minister of Agriculture, Wellington.

SIR,—

Auckland, N.Z., 24th March, 1897.

Your letter of the 27th February, which covered a copy of your Wellington Grader's report upon shipment of butter per "Rotomahana," reached me in due course. The delay in replying thereto, for which I apologize, is due to my having waited for information upon the subject.

I am sorry to have come to the conclusion that your officer has failed to give our interests, and through us the interests of dairying in the Auckland District generally, the protection and assistance which may reasonably have been expected from your branch of the Government service. A perusal of the report suggests that your Grader's conclusions were arrived at upon less information than the importance of the case warranted. Indeed, were not such a suggestion altogether inadmissible, I should fear that both it and the irrelevant strictures of your letter, together with the needless waste for which your Department is responsible, were the result of an intention most unfriendly to my association's business and to the dairying industry of the Auckland District. The opinion which you express that it will be necessary for your Department to "consider whether the present freezing facilities provided for Auckland can be continued" is unfortunate in being connected with your present treatment of Auckland interests.

I may premise that space was actually booked upon the "Takapuna," by which we have hitherto sent our butter; but, owing to the overlapping of engagements by the Union Steamship Company, I was induced to accept space in the "Rotomahana." To have insisted upon the butter in question going by the "Takapuna" would have been to have shut out some of our Taranaki neighbours, who, equally with ourselves, had suffered from lack of Home-freight space, and were

anxious to get their goods away. Under the special circumstances the Union Company were good enough to reserve the forehold of their "Rotomahana," which, besides the usual bulkhead between the compartments, is separated from the engine-room by a coal-bunker of 100 tons capacity. Our butter, which weighs over 70 tons in weight, frozen down to about 20° of temperature, was stowed without break from the flooring of the hold. It was anticipated that a small portion near the top would gather some heat from the deck above, but it was confidently expected by experts here that on reaching Wellington the average temperature would be below freezing-point. Your Grader's report does not furnish evidence that this expectation was not realised. I find that your Grader says, "At 8.50 went down 'Rotomahana's' hold, and had a good many kegs and boxes opened, and found that the temperature ran in the centre of the butter from 42° to 48°, and outside from 46° to 52°." On previous occasions your Graders have passed butter at a higher temperature than that, and the shipping companies have accepted it. Indeed, I have always found both the Shaw-Savill and New Zealand Shipping Companies most willing to facilitate business. The passing of the comparatively high-temperature butter has in every case been entirely in the interests of the industry of the colony. In the case under question even the few packages which could be examined without discharging the vessel, and which, because of their position, were likely to have gathered more heat than any other portion of the shipment, were only from 42° to 52° Fahr., while the bulk was doubtless much below freezing; and yet this was condemned. I remind you that your Grader explains that he "went down the hold," &c., and "found temperature," &c. The Union Company advise me that only a superficial inspection of the shipment could be made without discharging it." There is no evidence that any other examination took place. Indeed, all the information which I have obtained goes to show that it was upon this test that your Grader's action was taken. That is, upon this "superficial" examination of the packages most likely to be affected by heat, your officer undertook to forbid the shipment of our 70 tons of butter. My Wellington advices say, "Saw Captain Rose and the engineer of the 'Ruapehu,' and they informed me that it (the butter) could not go on board against the instructions of the Government Inspector." Your Department could not but have been aware of the extremities to which we were reduced and the losses which we had already suffered through the delay caused by the several mishaps in shipping matters during the two or three months preceding. It also might have known that the usual channel between here and Wellington was given up by ourselves in the interests of colonial dairying, and it is hardly credible that under these circumstances it should have used its position to hamper and waste as it has done.

I have referred to the ill-considered conclusions which your letter contains. You say, "The treatment which the parcel referred to has received has not only damaged it, but will have a detrimental effect upon the produce of the colony." I suppose this to mean that it is your opinion that the butter in question will reach England in a damaged and inferior condition, and that this condition will prejudice the reputation of New Zealand butter generally. For the present it will be sufficient for me to say I know something of the butter in question and of the probable effect upon it of a small portion having reached the temperature of 52°, and that in my judgment its quality for sale purposes has not been depreciated to the value of 6d. upon the whole parcel of 70 tons. I shall, later on, if you require it, be glad to give you proof that upon reaching England its quality, condition, and general sale value is equal to anything carried by the same vessel. I am naturally annoyed at this unwarrantable reflection upon my business, but I desire to address you with courtesy, and therefore content myself by asking you to try and imagine how little pleasure it would be possible for you to get out of a suggestion such as you make if you were the recipient of it instead of being the writer.

I am referring the Wellington Meat-freezing Company to you for payment of the freezing account. Any other accounts in this connection which come to hand I will also send you. As your Department's lack of care and judgment are responsible for having incurred these extra expenses, I expect that you will settle them.

I have already referred to the paragraph in your letter that "unless better arrangements are made for the proper coastal conveyance of butter to the final port of shipment it will be necessary for the Department to consider whether the present facilities for freezing provided at Auckland can be continued." Better provision for coastal carriage we shall very gladly hail. This is a matter in which your Department may be of the greatest service. You will speak for the whole of the coast, and doubtless with effect. Any information or assistance which I can give to enable you to obtain these advantages shall be at your service. I am sorry that the question of Auckland storage is again raised. I cannot suppose that you seriously desire that this district shall not have the advantages which are given to every considerable district in the colony. I assume that the time will come when the whole of the help now given to dairying will be withdrawn. When that happens we shall be content; but, while the present system exists, Auckland, which from its position requires more rather than less help, will ask for at least the same advantages as are given to other districts.

Should you desire it I will set forth at length the reasons why the present system of storing here is best. These reasons are numerous, so I refrain from adding them to this already very lengthy letter, especially as they must be evident to any one who knows anything of the business worked as it is and must be worked at this extreme end of the colony.

Awaiting the favour of your further communications, I am,

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,

Manager, New Zealand Dairy Association.

Mr. J. D. Ritchie, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Wellington.

We direct public attention to the correspondence which has taken place between the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture and the manager of the New Zealand Dairy Association, published in another column. The matter is important enough to form the subject of a parliamentary inquiry, and we hope that Mr. Spragg will take the necessary steps to bring the whole of the facts out by petition to the House of Representatives. Otherwise, there is good reason, from past experience, to fear that effect will be given to the threat contained in Mr. Ritchie's letter, "that, unless better arrangements are made for the proper coastal consignment of butter to final port of shipment, it will be necessary for the Department to consider whether the present facilities for freezing provided at Auckland can be continued." The menace is one which neither farmers nor manufacturers can lightly ignore, for its execution would be fraught with the gravest consequences to the butter industry of Auckland. It is a matter of public notoriety that the Department has, for the past two years, endeavoured to withhold from Auckland the freezing facilities which are granted by the Government to Taranaki, Wellington, Canterbury, and Otago. Notwithstanding that we labour under the special disadvantage of greater distance from the shipping port, the Department has done its utmost to compel Auckland factory-owners to submit to the freezing of their butter at Wellington instead of providing local facilities, and justice has only been grudgingly conceded after prolonged correspondence and appeals to Ministers. Evidently the Department has not been vanquished, for we take it that Mr. Ritchie's letter is the prelude to another attack. With regard to the merits of the question raised over the "Ruapehu's" butter, the case is so clearly stated in Mr. Spragg's reply to Mr. Ritchie that we need hardly recapitulate the facts. The stranding of the "Ruapehu" on New Year's Day threw the arrangements for shipping butter Home this season very seriously out of gear, and caused heavy losses to manufacturers. Under the circumstances, one might reasonably have expected some consideration from the Department of Agriculture. The manager of the New Zealand Dairy Association behaved in a most commendable spirit when he waived his claim over the "Takapuna's" storage-space in order that the Taranaki people might get their butter to the port of shipment. But this friendly and public-spirited act was very ill requited. We are told that the enforced refreezing of its butter at Wellington entails a loss upon the association of about £100. Mr. Spragg contends that this cost was unnecessary and vexatious, and if, as appears from the correspondence, only the outside packages of the 70 tons of butter, packed solid, were examined, and the highest temperature registered in these outside packages amounted to no more than 46° to 52°, the reflections cast upon the butter by the Department seem to be most unwarrantable, and are also unaccountable in view of the statement made by Mr. Spragg that "on previous occasions your Graders have passed butter at a higher temperature than that, and the shipping companies have accepted it." It is difficult to conceive that the bulk of 70 tons of butter, packed solid, at a temperature of 20° in the forehold of the "Rotomahana," could have been reduced below freezing-point in fifty-four hours. But, assuming that a fifty-four hours' passage from Auckland to Wellington renders butter which was hard-frozen unfit for shipment, what becomes of Mr. Ritchie's proposal to compel Auckland manufacturers to send their butter to Wellington unfrozen? One of the Government Graders who was questioned on the subject admitted that in all probability butter so carried would be running through the boxes before it reached its destination. Does Mr. Ritchie then seriously mean to deliberately close the ports of New Zealand altogether against Auckland butter, or is it merely his intention to handicap Aucklanders against all the rest of the Dominion, and ruin our exporters by unfair competition with more favoured manufacturers? Mr. Spragg takes a reasonable view of the matter when he says, "I assume that the time will come when the whole of the help now given to dairying will be withdrawn." When that happens we shall be content; but while the present system exists, Auckland, which from its position requires rather more than less help, will ask for at least the same advantages as are given to other districts. We may add that not only will Auckland ask for this, but if our members are worth their salt we shall get it, despite the determined hostility and obstruction of the officials of the Department of Agriculture. There is a feeling of distrust in the country with respect to this Department, which is daily gaining strength, and, unless the policy of vexatious interference and obstruction which has characterized the official administration of the Department is materially modified, public discontent will manifest itself in a manner that will surprise the Government as well as the officials. The fate of the eighteen thousand carefully selected vine-cuttings imported by Mr. F. D. Fenton, which, through the stupid obstinacy and red-tape of the Department, were sent from Auckland to Wellington and back to Auckland, with the result that only five hundred out of the eighteen thousand grew, has already been recorded. We have been shown the correspondence which has passed between Mr. Fenton and the Minister and officers of the Department. It ought to be printed with Mr. Spragg's correspondence in pamphlet form and scattered broadcast over the country. We are glad to see that the Vinegrowers' Association lately formed in the North have taken up the subject of viticulture with an energy and spirit that will brook no tomfoolery at the hands of officials. They have already addressed some strongly worded letters to Ministers which will, we trust, be the means of saving other enterprising settlers who are anxious to embark in the industry from meeting the fate which befell Mr. Fenton. The great question is this: Does the Department of Agriculture exist for the purpose of assisting the productive industries of the Dominion, or simply to harass and worry them? Surely the Acts that have been passed and the expenditure incurred were intended to foster and assist deserving settlers; but one might easily suppose, from the arrogance with which irritating regulations are sometimes enforced, that the intention was merely to provide snug billets for a number of officials bent upon magnifying their office. Parliament should seriously inquire whether the large sums voted annually for the Department of Agriculture are really productive of any useful results. The arbitrary powers that have been intrusted to officials are capable of being used most tyrannically. It is possible, indeed, for enterprising settlers to

be absolutely ruined in this way and promising industries destroyed; but the common-sense of the community will assert itself in the long-run, and compel such changes as will leave every man in the possession of the right to prosecute his calling in a reasonable way without fear of vexatious interference.

DEAR MR. KINSELLA,—

7th November, 1905.

Your new man, Thornton, is inclined to be punctilious to a degree. While admiring zeal in the prosecution of a duty, I confess to having grown to like the measure of consideration which your previous representatives have mixed with their officialdom. I am afraid from present appearances that the pleasant quality of consideration is to a large extent missing from Thornton's official mind. I am just now in receipt of a note from him, saying that on your instructions all tinned butter for the South Sea islands must now be inspected and graded. This is a departure which I have previously understood was not contemplated, nor desired, nor provided for by the Department. However, I have not much objection to it if the work is to be done at our convenience. You see, we sometimes get urgent orders which we have to prepare right up to the latest hour of shipping. There is therefore no time for formalities and nonsense. The work has to be done or the order has to be declined; and, of course, we prefer to do the work and to retain the business. Thornton wants one clear day's notice. This, I say, we cannot always give. If he will come when we want him, or, failing that, will take something for granted and not balk business, his interference will at least be innocuous, and if any one is pleased with the new arrangement there will not be much to be said against it. If, on the contrary, he is to be an obstructionist, as from many petty incidents I fear he is likely to be, then some of us will pray for his early decease, and for the return of the kind of good sense and official assistance to which we have been used.

Our pathway is not any too smooth under the pleasantest circumstances, and I grudge that we should miss the ready assistance which every Grader prior to Thornton has given to us. I believe the latter to be an efficient officer, and an exact one in a wooden-clock sort of way, but my affections do not go out to any extent to mechanism of that kind. We want to continue to feel that your Department exists generally for the sake of the industry and is an assistance to it. Any suggestion that the reverse is the fact is disagreeable to us, and I shall, as I am sure you will, regret any action which will make our relations less cordial.

If, without dealing with this growl as a formal complaint, you can help to smooth matters for us, I shall be glad.

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

J. A. Kinsella, Esq., Department of Agriculture, Wellington.

DEAR MR. KINSELLA,—

8th November, 1905.

Since writing to you, Messrs. Seegner, Langguth, and Co., clients of ours, have spoken to me about some instructions which they have received from Thornton. At my request they have sent me a copy of the letter which he addressed to them, which I enclose herewith. Part of the butter for this trade is in tins, which cannot possibly be examined after being packed, and upon which the Grader's opinion is neither valuable nor desired. If at any time it is necessary for a Grader's note to go forward with this class of goods, we shall be glad for Mr. Thornton to see the butter in course of being packed. Other portions of the order are in 1 lb. pats, which have not hitherto been graded, the balance being bulk, which is duly graded. Under all the circumstances, I am surprised at his statement that he has received your instructions to take legal proceedings. I shall be glad if you will let me know what changes have really taken place in the Dairy Act, or in your enforcement of it. The goods above referred to are shipped by us, and I am annoyed that our friends Messrs. Seegner, Langguth are receiving communications of this kind. The practice adopted by Townshend, and indeed all the Graders up to the present appointment, facilitated business without creating friction. It is a pity that any needless irritation should be created.

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

DEAR MR. KINSELLA,—

19th March, 1906.

Following the conversation which you and I had on our run out to Glasgow *re* butter-grading, I am glad to tell you that the judgment of our factory-managers as to quality is confirmed by letter received from our friends Lovell and Christmas this morning. I should tell you that our men, particularly Morris, of Ngaruawahia, whose butter has been practically condemned by Thornton, has said that the butter which he has manufactured this year has throughout been of a rather better quality than any he has previously made. Of course, this should be so. We have never been more careful in looking after each department of our work, and our appliances have never been more effective or possibly as effective. Acknowledging the "Gothic's" shipment, which, from account-sales to hand, is shown to have sold for from 2s. to 4s. per hundredweight above current quotations, our friends say, "We are pleased to say that your butter has given universal satisfaction this season. We have never seen it finer than it has been coming up to the present." The anomaly—the thing that I complain of—is that it has never before been graded as badly at this end. Either the judgment of your Grader, or of the sellers, whose opinion is backed by the prices they have realised, must be at fault. As we have talked upon this subject, I think it well to send you this later testimony.

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

DEAR SIR,—

14th June, 1907.

Yours of the 13th instant is to hand, and the contents have been carefully noted. The position is that we have a stack of butter in the freezing-works at the present time, forty of which have been put aside by the storeman of the freezing-works for shipment to Africa, and the balance is going forward by the "Corinna" to-morrow. In our letter of yesterday this was inadvertently stated as Wednesday. The boxes removed from the freezing-chamber yesterday, after our conversation per telephone, are representative of the butter for Africa, as well as that for the "Corinna" to-morrow. Under these circumstances it will surely not be necessary to thaw out a further lot of the African butter and then refreeze it for shipment again. It would be a distinct hurt to the butter. I shall be obliged if you will advise me per telephone this morning whether you insist upon this, or whether you will accept the boxes removed yesterday as representing the whole. Your letter seems to suggest that we have resisted some of your requirements in connection with the grading of this butter, but this is not so. We instructed the storeman at the freezing-works to take a sample exactly in accordance with the wish which you expressed per telephone. Indeed, we offered to leave it for you to give him such instructions as were necessary. Perhaps I should say that the butter in question was stored for local use, but owing to the unusually flush autumn we have rather more than is required here.

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

The Government Produce Grader, Auckland.

DEAR SIR,—

21st December, 1907.

I have this day telegraphed to you saying, "Shipping 655 boxes Africa Monday. Owing unavoidable circumstances forty in chamber only fifty-four hours. Freezing company doing best with it. Most important all go forward, otherwise lose dead freight and disappoint a valuable client. Shipping company and ourselves agree send. Please instruct Thornton facilitate. Kindly reply." I think you will gather the position from this telegram. The more amplified facts are that an order of a pressing nature has reached us from South Africa. We have done our utmost to get the butter prepared. The client is a valuable one, and it is exceedingly probable that if we send this butter it will lead to considerable and valuable business, hence our anxiety. The general facts have been explained to your Grader, Thornton, and he has been requested to give us the assistance which every other Grader that has been in Auckland would certainly have given under similar circumstances. I am very sorry to say that his attitude is one of red-tapeism and obstruction to business such as I have described. While recognising the value of regulations I am satisfied that neither you nor any officer of the Department who has brains wants to use regulations to delay and destroy business. I am looking forward to your kind assistance in this matter. While upon this subject I may say that I have in no sense realised the promise which Thornton made in your presence to drop his antagonistic attitude towards my company. Precisely the same spirit through which he some years ago cost us £100 of needless expenditure is animating him this morning, and, judging from our contact with him, has animated him practically since you and he and I had an interview together. I very much regret this, but I fear that I must now give up any attempt to work with him as I should like to work with an officer of your Department. Considering the magnitude of our business, this is now a matter of very great importance to my company, and I shall be glad of a line from you as to what you think had better be done. I am writing to you upon this subject, and shall look with anxiety for your reply.

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

D. Cuddie, Esq., Dairy Commissioner, Wellington.

DEAR SIR,—

23rd December, 1907.

Thanks for your prompt attention to my request by wire on Saturday last. We do not desire, nor do we ask for, anything which we feel your Department ought not to give to anybody similarly situated with ourselves, and we shall be glad to conform to the regulations exactly in the spirit that you would do if you were in our position. I had forgotten that Mr. Cuddie was absent from Wellington when I wrote, and it will perhaps be well for my letter addressed to him to stand over for his attention when he returns, as he is acquainted with the facts referred to. In the interval, we shall, in the event of our experiencing difficulty with Thornton, refer to you direct, as we have done in the present case.

Wishing you the compliments of the season,

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

Mr. Singleton, Acting Dairy Commissioner, Wellington.

DEAR SIR,—

27th December, 1907.

I have to thank you for yours of the 24th, which contains confirmation of your wire of the 21st instant.

At the time that I wired and wrote I had forgotten that Mr. Cuddie was absent from the colony. I have since said so in a letter addressed to you. You would understand my letter as referring to something with which Mr. Cuddie was familiar, and since he and I came to an understanding,

which it would be well for us to reconsider together, you will also understand my preference for allowing matters to stand over until he returns.

I appreciate your proposal to allow your office to bear the onus of Thornton's action towards ourselves, but my respect for the heads of your Department negatives your kind intention. Without attempting to discuss the position, beyond dealing with the contents of your letter, I have to say that I cannot accept your argument dealing with Thornton's impartiality. Even had the thing asked for been an impossible one, he might have shown a desire to meet the exigencies of the case, instead of which our request was from the first met in the spirit of obstruction.

I do not know what instructions you refer to as having been given to Thornton, but I assume they would not have prevented him from offering to refer our urgent business to you, although I am now satisfied that had he done so it would have been with the object of getting your confirmation of his own attitude. You say other shippers had similar requests refused by Thornton, and accepted his decision. Here, again, I do not know what are the facts you refer to. I am aware that in July last Messrs. Wright and Stevenson arranged with Thornton through our telephone for a shipment of butter which they were purchasing from and having prepared by us. It was then agreed that the butter was to be put into the freezer some time before Saturday evening, and that it would then be shipped on the following Monday. Our secretary, who was standing by the telephone at the time, then spoke to Thornton, and received confirmation of this arrangement from him. It happened that we were not able to prepare the butter to put into the chamber on the Saturday, and it was finally shipped a week or so later. In this case Wright and Stevenson's urgent business received commendable consideration from Thornton.

I note what you have further to say respecting other people's interests. Will you let me say that we are not without experience as shippers of butter, nor are we inconsiderate of other shippers' interests? Thornton's pretext for involving us in a loss of over £100 for refreezing butter some time ago was due to our having, at the request of the Union Steamship Company, made way for Taranaki shippers, whose names we did not even know, but we did know they were in a tight corner. We then had an acknowledged claim upon space on a west coast steamer, but we gave it up in the general interests. We should probably do the same thing again, and at any time we are not likely to want anything from your Department which would involve the risk of injury to anybody else's property, nor shall we at any time ask your Department for any consideration which ought not to be given to any one else under similar circumstances.

I regret that through the inadvertency of my forgetting that Mr. Cuddie was absent from New Zealand, I have caused you trouble over this matter.

I propose to do myself the pleasure of calling upon you when I am next in Wellington.

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

W. M. Singleton, Esq., Acting Dairy Commissioner, Wellington.

DEAR SIR,—

23rd September, 1908.

Several days since I conferred with you as to the closing-time for the "Tongariro's" shipment, and you were good enough to arrange that the last lot of Ngaruawahia butter would come down by the train reaching here at 2.30 to-day, and the Pukekohe lot by the cattle-train arriving about 5. It may be a little earlier or a little later. It is now half past 3, and we are surprised at receiving your notification per telephone that the Pukekohe butter will be excluded. I explained by telephone that we should have sought to get part of it down by the 2.30 train, although we certainly could not have got it all down by that opportunity. As we are already below our estimates, even a part would have been better than none at all. I deprecate your inconsiderate action in altering the closing-time after making arrangements with us, and that after it is too late to adjust our arrangements; and I further deprecate your manner of addressing me on the subject, and of seeking to garble my remarks *re* the despatch of the Pukekohe butter into a statement that we should have sent it all by the 2.30 train had we known. If you will read what is stated above, which is what I told you per telephone, you will see there is a substantial difference.

Yours, &c.,

H. E. PACEY, Secretary.

Mr. Thornton, Produce Grader, Auckland.

DEAR SIR,—

24th September, 1908.

I enclose for your information a letter addressed to Thornton, Grader at this port. I am sorry that he still retains the disposition of which I have previously had to complain, and that he is at least inconsiderate of our interests. In the present case he consented to an arrangement, suggested by our Mr. Pacey, that he would receive at the freezer as part of "Tongariro" shipment of butter from our Pukekohe factory, which was to arrive by the cattle-train yesterday (Wednesday) afternoon. After we had made our arrangements accordingly, he refused to receive this butter for the shipment in question. I think it right to acquaint you with these facts.

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

Mr. Cuddie, Dairy Commissioner, Wellington.

DEAR SIR,—

12th October, 1908.

Yours of the 8th instant: I am sorry I cannot agree with you that Thornton's conduct in question was due to a misunderstanding. The arrangement was duly made with him by our Mr. Pacey. It was cancelled at the last moment, as described, without consideration for us, and although it has been referred to in communication with Thornton on three occasions—twice through the telephone and once by the letter of the 23rd September, copy of which you received—he has not suggested to us that there was a misunderstanding, and am surprised to learn that he has conveyed this impression to you. The facts are exactly as stated in the letter of the 23rd September referred to:

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,

Managing Director.

D. Cuddie, Esq., Dairy Commissioner, Wellington.

DEAR SIR,—

27th October, 1908.

I do not want to prolong the correspondence on the subject-matter of yours of the 21st instant, but feel that I ought to say that you appear to have entirely failed to note that on the three occasions referred to in mine of the 12th, when Thornton was reminded of his arrangement to receive late "Tongariro" butter, he did not suggest, much less say, that we had misunderstood him. If you add to this the fact that the arrangement was referred to after it was made, and prior to the day upon which the butter in question arrived, and was assented to by Thornton, you will find difficulty, as I do, in accepting the theory of his action being the result of misunderstanding.

I appreciate your position, and recognise that it places you under obligation to protect your officers in a full reasonable manner. On the other hand, I understand that genuine complaints are entitled to your consideration, and I have hitherto addressed you on this understanding. You say Thornton has not been inconsiderate of us in the past. I am sorry to say that my memory of specific instances to the contrary makes it impossible for me to agree with your opinion. In the case in question, if a misunderstanding had occurred, which it did not, very small consideration for our interests would have prompted him to meet us in the difficulty thus created, which, indeed, should not have been a difficulty at all, as our requirement was only in accordance with previous practice.

I am not anxious to dig up old annoyances. I have been quite willing to wipe the slate and start afresh, but have so soon met with fresh cause of annoyance that I am not now very hopeful as to the future.

I have no desire to discuss Thornton's relations with other people, nor do I want to comment at large or in kind upon the unpleasant suggestion of your subfinal paragraph. It is sufficient reply to your implied reflection that, during the many years of contact with Graders at this port, prior to the arrival of Thornton, we never on any occasion received treatment of which we desired to complain.

I hope, after all, you have some reason for your trust that we shall not have further cause to complain of Thornton's conduct. Certainly we shall, as hitherto, endeavour to avoid needless friction.

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,

Managing Director.

D. Cuddie, Esq., Dairy Commissioner, Wellington.

DEAR SIR,—

Auckland, 28th August, 1906.

I am enclosing herewith copy of a letter which I have received from Mr. James Miller, one of the directors of the Onewhero Co-operative Company. The facts which led up to this letter being sent to me are that for some time past there has been a disposition on the part of the shareholders of the Onewhero Co-operative Company to amalgamate with our New Zealand Dairy Association (Limited). They have been influenced by knowing that for years past we have paid to our shareholders, who are otherwise similarly situated, larger prices than their separate management enabled them to pay. They finally decided upon amalgamation, one person only voting against the motion. I was at Onewhero at the time of this decision, and was then informed "Thornton had done his best to prevent the amalgamation from taking place." I have since inquired for the facts, and have received the letter, copy of which I am sending to you. If Mr. Miller's statements are correct, and any one who knows him would believe them to be so, it would appear that Mr. Thornton has allowed his marked unfriendliness to my company to manifest itself in other than his accustomed, and what I recognise to be his authorised, official manner.

I call your attention to the discussion mentioned in Mr. Miller's letter *re* tests which your officials introduced, apparently as part of their mission to Onewhero. If the contention to our disadvantage, which was backed by offer of wages, meant anything at all, it must have meant, as it was understood to mean, that my company's tests were not fair ones. You will learn from Mr. Miller's letter that whatever was said failed to influence the final decision of the Onewhero people; but the suggestion and inference was none the less outrageous and unjustifiable.

I also call your attention to the general question of the interference of Thornton and Shirley in this matter. You will see that Mr. Miller came to the conclusion that Thornton and Shirley's visit to Onewhero was for the express purpose, as he says, of "putting in a word for Mr. Brown," who, by the by, has since been employed by us, and "putting in a word against the amalgamation."

I shall be glad to know if it is part of their duty to act as advisers on questions of business, and especially on questions in which two companies are concerned, as in the present case. I do not now raise the question of the value of their opinions and judgment in such matters. I hope to find that I need not discuss their competence or otherwise to act as business advisers.

Requesting the favour of reply at your first convenience.

J. A. Kinsella, Esq., Dairy Commissioner,
Department of Agriculture, Wellington.

I am, &c.,
WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

DEAR SIR,—

Onewhero, 24th August, 1906.

Yours of the 21st instant to hand, and contents noted *re* Mr. Thornton. Messrs. Thornton and Shirley came into our district for the purpose, so they said, of acquainting our milk-suppliers of a proposed winter show and conference to be held in Auckland some time next winter. They had a look over our factory, and a chat with Mr. Brown and, I think, Mr. Cathcart also. Several other suppliers, in passing, called in, and evidently the conversation between our people and Messrs. Thornton and Shirley was upon our intended amalgamation with your company. Mr. Glasgow, who has been all along opposed to selling and joining your company, brought the two gentlemen over to me. Mr. Thornton explained they had come for the purpose of having a chat with the suppliers about a winter show and conference, and wanted the settlers to feel interested. He had heard with regret that we were going to dispense with the services of Mr. Brown as manager, and then spoke at some length of the abilities of Mr. Brown as butter-maker. He also said he was sorry to learn that we thought about selling our concern and joining the New Zealand Dairy Association. He thought that would be a mistake, that we could do better the way we were. I told them I had gone into the whole matter, and was thoroughly convinced we would be much better in joining your company, and I was going to do my best to get our people to sell out. Mr. Shirley then took up the conversation, and said he was sure, if we would go into the matter, he could prove from figures that we could do better by remaining as we were. I then got down the *Dairyman*, and quoted to them the opinion of the Taranaki people of your company and the Taieri and Peninsula. I asked them what they thought of that, but they could not give me a reasonable reply. After further haggling, Mr. Shirley said he had noticed our percentages on the board were good, and would bet me 5s. that none of the New Zealand Dairy Association's creameries would register so high. I told him I would take him up, and would back Kihi Kihi to be as good, and they were about the same supply. I then explained to him that it was not a fair thing to quote any particular creamery for one month, or even two. The correct thing to do was to compare the two balance-sheets of the companies in question, and see what their average tests were for the season. I then produced a copy of your balance-sheet for the previous year, and noted the average percentage. I then found our balance-sheet, but, unfortunately, our average test for the year was not on it; but I quoted from memory, and Mr. Glasgow agreed with me, and it showed your average percentage to be the highest by a little. That settled that point. I asked them to stay and have some lunch, and after lunch I was willing to go into the whole matter. But they could not stay, as they had promised Mr. Brown to go there to lunch, and they wanted to get back in time for the train. Mr. Thornton at this stage said he wished it particularly understood that he was not antagonistic to Mr. Spragg or the New Zealand Dairy Association, and had not come to try and persuade me one way or the other. But there were things he could not say here, but would be at liberty to do so on the floor at the conference. He expressed a wish that I would go there and put my views, and he would be only too pleased to open his mind and tell us something we did not know. All this occupied about three-quarters of an hour. There were a number of other details gone into, but of no importance. In thinking the matter over a few days after, I came to the conclusion that they came up with the express purpose of putting in a word for Mr. Brown and putting in a word against the amalgamation. But the plan they took and the statements they made would, I believe, exonerate them, although personally I did not like their method of procedure. I do not think they carried any weight, or were the means of turning any of the suppliers from voting against the amalgamation. This is all I can think of that took place between us. If it is of any use to you, you are quite at liberty to use it as you think best.

Mr. Pacey, Secretary, New Zealand Dairy Association.

I am, &c.,
JAS. MILLER.

DEAR SIR,—

Auckland, 25th September, 1906.

Following mine of yesterday's date, I have to advise you that I have since then received the promised extract from the memo. addressed by you to the Secretary for Agriculture. I am sorry to say that it does not convey much information to me, excepting that I understand from it that you are not satisfied with the replies given by Messrs. Thornton and Shirley to some questions submitted to them. I further gather from the extract that even in communicating for your information, where they had every reason to carefully exercise their utmost discretion, you are of opinion that they showed a lack of judgment. I submit that if this is so, the ordinary judgment which they may exercise, as in the case which I have reported, is likely to be of a quality which will not advance the dairying industry of this district.

Judging from the broken report which I have received, I infer that these men have said that in the present case they were asked questions in "meeting the public." Such a statement would not be in accordance with the information which I have received. On the contrary, I understand

that their presence at Onewhero was unexpected, and their pretext or reason (whichever is the proper word) for the visit was not generally thought to be adequate. Indeed, you will gather from the letter written by Mr. Miller that at least his opinion was that they went to Onewhero with the object of discrediting and injuring my company. This, I fear, they did deliberately. They also incidentally and, I think, ignorantly ran a risk of injuring the other company. I cannot believe that you would tolerate such conduct, even if it took place at a "meeting," not even if it was in reply to questions; but the case is certainly not improved when the untrue and insulting reflection upon ourselves took place, as I understand it did, in Mr. Miller's private house, to which, as far as Mr. Miller was concerned, these men had adjourned without invitation, and when the statements themselves were volunteered.

You will remember that in my letter of the 28th August, addressed to the Dairy Commissioner, certain specific charges were made against these men. He, however, has since referred me to you. If the charges are true, they are evidence of pronounced antagonism to ourselves. They also indicate that my company is being wickedly maligned by one or both of these men, and that unwarrantable interference is taking place with the object of injuring my company.

I shall be glad to know definitely in what manner these men will be dealt with, and, if they are to remain in Auckland, what attitude you think my company should adopt towards persons who are wanting in general judgment, and who are guilty of special antagonism and insulting and wicked conduct against ourselves.

For your information I am enclosing copies of letter which I addressed to the Commissioner, and also a copy of Mr. Miller's letter on the subject. May I ask you for the favour of your reply at the earliest convenient date?

Yours, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

The Hon. the Minister for Agriculture, Wellington.

DEAR SIR,—

19th December, 1908.

I am obliged to you for yours of the 16th December, and I thank you for the spirit in which you have sent me the unpleasant intimation which it contains. I confess to being surprised at the report, as our overruns, even when full allowances are made for losses in manufacture, do not indicate that we have excess moisture in our butter. In addition to this, we have a rough daily analysis of our butter made at our factories, which we have felt were genuine guides for us, and these have not indicated results similar to your report. It happens that just now, in addition to this, we have had an analysis made by Mr. Pond, Colonial Analyst, Auckland. The boxes which the samples were taken from were taken haphazard from stacks of boxes, being shipments which were being made to the freezing-chambers on the 3rd December. Pond's analysis is very similar to the rough analysis made in our own factories from the same day's make. This, we have supposed, checked our own methods, although we should not suppose that our means are very exact. Pond's return is as follows:—

Samples.	Anchor. Per Cent.	Dairy. Per Cent.
Water	13·06	12·97
Fatty acids	84·61	84·83
Curd	0·47	0·80
Inorganic salts	1·86	1·40
	100·00	100·00
Salts proportionate to water	14·3	10·77
Curd contains milk-sugar in small amount.		

I cannot suppose that there has been any mistake in confusing our sample with any other butter by your agent at New Plymouth, and your Department is sure to have competent, skilled men engaged in such delicate work. The conflict between Pond's analysis, which practically confirms our own work, and the results obtained in New Plymouth are puzzling to me.

I am, of course, in sympathy with you in desire to protect the reputation of the Dominion, added to which I am anxious that we ourselves should not get into trouble, and I am very thankful for the assistance which you render. I should take it as a favour if you would put your analyst in communication with Mr. Pond, with the object of discovering a reason for the apparent discrepancy. Of course, it does not follow that you had a sample of butter of the same day's make. On the other hand, it is well that you should know that the daily rough analyses at the factories show foreign matter in our butter of a consistent quality from day to day. Would it be well for samples to be taken from the same box of butter both by Mr. Pond and by your man? My experience with Pond's work has led me to trust him absolutely, and his confirmation of our own estimate of the foreign contents in our butter was causing me to feel quite secure.

We are not using a combined churn and butter-worker in either of our factories. Our Pukekohe factory-manager has expressly objected to having one. We have had one delivered at Ngaruawahia, which we intend to experiment with; but it was delivered late in the season, and has not yet been erected. I should like your opinion upon the combined churn and worker, which I shall be glad to submit to our Ngaruawahia manager for him to check when he experiments. I shall send your report on to Pukekohe for the information of our factory-manager, and I will thank you if you will kindly send me your comments upon the information which this letter contains.

With kind regards and Christmas greetings,

I am, &c.,

WESLEY SPRAGG,
Managing Director.

D. Cuddie, Esq., Dairy Commissioner, Wellington.

TESTS OF BUTTER FOR MOISTURE CONTENTS, N.Z.D.A., SEASON 1908-9.

13-27	14-00	11-75	9-18	12-10	14-45	13-95
13-11	13-99	10-95	9-85	11-60	13-66	13-80
13-28	12-93	11-28	12-06	12-20	14-90	13-00
13-25	12-92	12-83	12-58	12-60	12-96	13-42
13-36	15-16	12-81	12-60	10-75	14-12	13-75
13-30	14-63	12-86	14-10	12-40	13-21	15-45
12-79	10-30	13-06	12-20	14-65	13-98	12-43
14-15	10-67	10-06	14-60	12-00	14-05	12-70
13-82	12-96	10-46	13-10	12-30	14-24	12-90
13-80	13-09	12-37	13-50	12-15	14-50	13-06
13-86	14-84	13-77	15-00	10-15	13-25	13-97
13-84	12-78	13-60	13-80	12-40	14-00	—
13-82	11-33	13-81	12-20	12-50	13-77	1320-04
13-75	11-50	9-68	12-40	12-11	13-75	—
13-74	11-97	9-16	12-30	14-58	13-65	—

101 samples. Average, 12·94.

Department of Agriculture, Dairy Division,
Wellington, 23rd February, 1909.

DEAR SIR,—

With regard to the moisture content of your butter for export, I regret to have to inform you that a sample was taken from a consignment graded on the 13th instant, and was forwarded to New Plymouth for analysis, and found to contain over 20 per cent. of water.

This butter was also found to be over 2 lb. short in weight, and it was marked with the registered number 109.

As these irregularities are breaches of the Dairy Industry Act, I have been instructed to take proceedings against the company.

If the butter is still in store it might be advisable for you to have a sample taken for analysis on your own account.

I am sorry that any delay should have occurred in notifying you in regard to this matter, but, being absent in the South Island, it was held over until my return.

I might add that the sample was taken from a consignment of ten boxes of butter, which were graded on the above-mentioned date.

Yours, &c.,

D. CUDDIE,

Dairy Commissioner.

The Managing Director, New Zealand Dairy Association, Auckland.

16th December, 1908.

DEAR SIR,—

A sample of butter taken from a consignment received at the stores from your Pukekohe factory was analysed at New Plymouth on the 9th instant, and found to contain 16·17 per cent. of moisture.

You will observe that this is slightly over the legal limit, and I would point out the necessity of guarding against any excess over 16 per cent.—in fact, it would be unwise to work up to this, as it is a very difficult matter to regulate the moisture in butter to within 1 or 2 per cent.

I presume that you are now using the combined churn and butter-worker, and this will probably account for the high moisture content in this case.

There has been quite a lot of trouble in this connection at other factories this season, and I am anxious to prevent any butter leaving the Dominion which would lead to a prosecution at the Home end, for it only requires one or two cases to be taken up by the authorities there to seriously affect the good name of New Zealand butter.

My reason for bringing this matter under your notice is purely in the interests of your company and of the dairy industry generally, and I trust that steps will be taken by your managers to prevent any butter being sent in for shipment which contains more than 16 per cent. of moisture.

Yours, &c.,

D. CUDDIE,

Dairy Commissioner.

Wesley Spragg, Esq., Auckland.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing 1,400 copies, £12 3s.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1909.

Price 9d.]

