

at. They were then flung into barrels and carted off to North Vancouver by a man who used them to feed his pigs.

A certain wholesale grocery firm had two whole floors of its warehouse stacked full of canned fruit and vegetables for which it had paid \$1.00 to \$1.40 a dozen. It held them until the increasing war demands put prices up and then it sold them at \$2.25 to \$3.50 a dozen. Early last year this same firm was selling rice at \$195 a ton which it had purchased shortly before at \$72 a ton.

Here is a confidential report that was made to Ottawa on the work of the fruit and produce combine of Water Street. It tells of how a certain firm which would not join the combine and dared to sell some goods at lower rates than those fixed by it, was deliberately boycotted by the members of this "ring" and the brokers forced to cancel their orders. Referring to two court cases which this firm won against these brokers this report asserts:

"A perusal of the evidence and particularly the discoveries, will show clearly that the Association was behind the interference in every case and that the brokers were merely acting under instructions. This is borne out by information I have received from some brokers and others who know that line of business. . . . They say that the Association directs the way in which each member conducts his business, and that if they break any of the resolutions they are fined. I understand that the Association meets at least weekly and has a secretary; that the various grocers are listed and if any dealer sells to a grocer contrary to the list he is fined. . . . My informants even suggest that this scheme of things also covers quantities of sale, prices, etc."

Of course they do. One lesser member of the combine sold one crate of vegetables, on the verge of spoiling, to a Chinaman peddler at a reduction. The deal was discovered and he was brought on the carpet and promptly fined. That was in war time, when the Government of this Dominion was entreating the people to produce more food and save something at every meal for the hungry Allies and the battling armies. And that kind of thing is still going on—so I was told the other day by one who does business on Wholesale Row. Now, I do not want to be misunderstood. I am not condemning any men as individuals. I have no doubt that some of these men are working as hard and seeking to do business as honestly as any of us. I am not claiming they are all dishonest exploiters of the people's food. But I do say that the system under which they are forced to do business, the system which tolerates and even necessitates this kind of thing is a rotten system. So long as men are forced to earn their livelihood by making profits out of their neighbors, so long we shall have these iniquitous practices.

Remember, this is only a sample, in a very small way, of how the thing is done, and the public made pay. It stretches