

regard to ventilated chambers for apples. We found we could do nothing with the agents of the companies in Canada, so we interviewed owners of the Elder-Dempster, Thompson, Dominion and one or two other lines in England, and urged them to take the necessary precautions to ventilate the holds properly, not only for apples but for cheese, by putting in ventilating fans which would exhaust the warm air. They promised this, and in some instances in some ships this was done last fall, and I am satisfied that the change was in the interests of the trade. This will remedy that evil to a very considerable extent. I may say this judging from several shipments sent from Nova Scotia of which we know in ships so ventilated, and which reached England in far better condition than any shipments had ever done before, and I am satisfied a great deal of difficulty can be prevented in that way. If Parliament grants me the funds asked for this coming season, I propose to see that we have an officer of the department in Montreal, St. John and Halifax especially charged with the shipping and loading of our apples, and seeing that they go forward in good shape. I think the magnitude of the trade will justify this expenditure, and I think it will be done and will accomplish a great deal of good.

The next difficulty is a much greater one, and that is the difficulty regarding the quality of the fruit itself. Our people have got this in their own hands. If our people choose to grow good fruit and put only the best quality in one barrel and the second best in another, and reject the third best they can establish a reputation in a very short time. A gentleman in Nova Scotia has shipped in the last three years 500 barrels of apples and out of all these he has received complaints of only one slack barrel, and the average net profits over all expenses for his apples have been \$3.50 a barrel over all expenses, commission, freight, etc., and only one barrel was reported as slack. That is a case where a man had taken pains to sort and pick carefully with result of having fine profit. The other apples which he rejected he sold locally either for cider or for the local market. Some people will say that he did not get as much as if he had sold all his apples, about 700 barrels, for the export trade and got a less price. I do not believe that and I know as a matter of fact men who are doing that do not net as large a profit as he did. The question of Government inspection and grading of the apples at the port of shipment has been discussed. I confess I do not see the possibility of doing it on any satisfactory basis. I would be glad if it could be pointed out how to do it in a satisfactory way, but so far I do not see my way to manage it. There are differences of quality in different seasons, in some seasons there is a large number of good quality, and other seasons we do not have so much. Different varieties would have to be inspected. If in every shipment there were only barrels of one variety a certain number would have to be opened. But with a variety of apples every barrel would have to be opened. The question of Government inspectors is a very difficult one to deal with. Have I any right to say to a man who wants to ship something "you shall not do it." I do not think that the Government or the Parliament has any right to do that. During the time two years ago that there was a discussion on the Act introduced to amend the General Inspection Act I received shoals of letters from all parts of the country, from everybody engaged in the trade, pointing out difficulties in the way of such legislation as this, and I confess I was frightened from undertaking it.

By Mr. Featherston :

Q. In 1892 or 1893 you established a standard apple barrel and according to the experience which we have had here to-day that barrel is not what is required for the trade.

A. It is a barrel which the trade does not like to use and the Nova Scotia part of the trade have refused and do not use it. I went down there this winter and met the fruit growers there and several of their associations in the Annapolis valley, and they simply said they would not have anything to do with the standard barrel but they asked that we should change the law and make their barrels the standard.