

Another dealer made a million dollars of profits on eggs in a single year. An investigation revealed that eggs had gone through sixteen middlemen's hands in getting to market, each of whom took off a profit. At last they were selling up to 75 cents a dozen while the same eggs were selling for 35 cents in England, after two and a half years of war. One of the storage companies in Montreal dealing in eggs declared 50% on its capital in 1917, in addition to large reserves. No wonder the Cost of Living Commissioner, "that man O'Conner," as they called him, declared that "the prices charged for eggs were unjustifiable." And these are the people who determine the price of the eggs produced by the fowl in the backyards of Vancouver. The same practice prevails as to poultry, butter, sugar and many other commodities. In fact, almost every article of food is under the control of the middleman, who lives like a parasite off the food that others produce. He does not hesitate to hold back food till it rots, so as to keep the price where he wants it.

We have, on a small scale, right here in Vancouver a sample of what goes on all over the continent as a part of the system by which the middlemen and food speculators keep the prices just where they want them. Here is a detailed report, giving exact figures for every month of last year and four months of this, which shows that over 490 tons of food-stuffs were destroyed in the city incinerator of Vancouver during the twelve months of 1918. In the month of May over 82 tons of fruit and vegetables, fish and eggs were destroyed, an average of nearly three tons a day. One firm alone sent over 33 tons of potatoes. In June there were 79 tons destroyed, and up to the end of April this year 126 tons have been burned. Where did it come from? The bulk of it came from the wholesale warehouses on Water Street where almost every firm that deals in farm produce is in the combine known as the Vancouver Fruit and Produce Association. And I am informed there are two or three private incinerators along "the street" where food is destroyed and no record made public.

Now I am not suggesting that all this food is deliberately wasted. A certain amount of fruit and produce will go bad in spite of the utmost care and honesty on the part of those handling it. That is inevitable. It may be tainted before it is shipped. It may be side-tracked by the railroad long enough to allow it to spoil. It may rot in the warehouse before it is noticed. But I am informed by men who have worked for years in these places that frequently produce is held for higher prices until it becomes unfit for food for man or beast. In one instance four carloads of Lillooet potatoes were held all winter for \$1.75 a sack until nearly two carloads had to be destroyed and not a cent of reduction was made in the price, except five cents a sack on a five-ton order for a department store. In another warehouse 700 crates or boxes of apples were kept from October until about March when only one box in every fifteen was said to be fit to look