

*Inspection of Canned Salmon*

were now all right, at least they thought so until three weeks ago, when they threw this order in council into the works and upset everything again. Let me quote the letter of the department dealing with these regulations:

... it may be said, without the possibility of successful contradiction, ...

That is a brave statement.

... that the fact that the original regulations and the amendments thereto have been accepted with remarkably near unanimity by the canners, is in itself an evidence of the efficiency of the regulations.

Is it really? It is to laugh. It might also be held to be evidence of the fact that the regulations were so ineffective that the people concerned did not bother to complain of them. It might be taken to mean that they were glad to get the appearance of government endorsement of their product even though the regulations were so feeble and ineffective that they did not impose any restriction on them. Suppose I were asked to formulate a set of regulations to deal with a case of smuggling, and later I had to make a report. I might say, "Well, I have a set of regulations that have worked like a charm. The smugglers are perfectly satisfied with them." Would that be considered an evidence of efficiency? I rather doubt it, yet that is all it amounts to. For evidence of that kind I would rather look to statements by buyers and wholesalers in other countries. I would look to see if these Englishmen were content to accept the government inspection and no longer insist on their own inspection.

At any rate, that is the official attitude. We have further endorsement from British Columbia. The chief supervisor of fisheries is quoted as follows:

It has proved a notable success and has been welcomed by overseas buyers, especially in Great Britain and Australia.

Then I see a long article in the *Pacific Fisherman*, a well known fisheries paper, in which the chief supervisor is quoted as follows:

The results, he said, have been in general highly satisfactory, and the buying trade has been well pleased;—

Then follow endorsements by two or three of the leading cannery operators in British Columbia. That must have been a red letter day for the chief supervisor of fisheries. In addition to having his views recorded on one page, I find on an adjoining page a really pretty photograph of him attired in the most up-to-date golfing togs and associating with some of the leading cannery operators on the coast, an attitude which I

[Mr. Neill.]

think is highly symbolic. It was rather curious to hear the chief supervisor talk about the results being so satisfactory in Australia, because I have in my hand a letter written last November by a man who says he is the representative of a large merchandising business in Australia, the name of which he mentions. He says:

For some time past, several merchants have been relabelling salmon, mostly pinks, and naming them reds and distributing them as reds. The practice, apart from its dishonesty and misrepresentation, was causing bona fide traders concern, especially those who would not practise the deception.

Then in a letter he sent to the government of Australia he says:

I understand the federal government of Canada was trying to make it an offence under the pure foods department or health act, but the results are very disappointing.

But the chief supervisor says he has had word that the results are very satisfactory.

Mr. STEVENS: Would the hon. gentleman mind letting me see that letter?

Mr. NEILL: Certainly. Part of it is a personal letter to myself, but I know my hon. friend will treat it as such.

Among the regulations passed last April was one establishing a board of inspectors. I objected to that system very strongly, because it appeared that these inspectors who were liable to condemn the packs of the canners to the extent of thousands of dollars were to be nominated, appointed and paid by the canners themselves. Is it any wonder that I objected to a system of that kind? I have in my hand a clipping from the journal published by the Minister of Trade and Commerce, in which comment is made on the system of inspecting meat in Australia. I find these words:

All these inspectors are salaried officers of the commonwealth government entirely independent of the proprietors of the meat works.

Is that not the proper way? How would it look if this same journal, published by the government, in explaining the system of salmon inspection had to say that these inspectors were nominated, appointed and paid by the canners themselves? What weight has an inspection conceived and carried on in this way? I will say, however, as I said in April last, that by chance or otherwise the first men appointed to the board were good, capable, competent and reliable men, whose integrity and honesty is unquestioned. I am not saying a word against them. I said then, and I repeat, that I would be quite satisfied with their judgment as such, but I do condemn the system. We left it to the judgment of