

MONDAY, 17TH JUNE, 1861.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

Present :—

Mr. McGlashan,
 “ Carter,
 “ Dick,
 “ Mason,

Mr. O'Neill,
 “ Williamson,
 The Hon. Mr. Weld.

Mr. Graham in the Chair.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Weld handed in for the information of the Committee a copy of the letter he had addressed to the Senior Commissariat Officer respecting any contracts they might have with Sydney.

Mr. Williamson proposed that Dr. Aitken should be summoned to give evidence before the Committee on its next sitting.

Agreed to.

Mr. Walters called in and examined.

Mr. Walters,
 17 June, 1861.

1. *By Chairman.*] What are you ?—I am a Butcher, carrying on business in Queen-street, Auckland.

2. Have you had experience in supplying Cattle for the Commissariat ?—I have.

3. What effect do you think a Law interdicting the importation of cattle would have on the markets here ?—Not much ; as I believe there are plenty of cattle in these Islands to supply the market.

4. What is the average number of cattle killed per week ?—100 head.

The *Provincial Government Gazette* was here produced with a Return by which it appeared that during the months of January, February, and March, the following number of cattle had been killed:—

1861.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.	Calves.
January	258	1278	84	48
February	223	1222	112	21
March	237	1125	114	20
	718	3625	310	89

Examination resumed.

5. What is the present contract price for meat ?—6½d. per lb.

6. How long have you had the contract ?—At different periods during the last seven years.

7. What was the date of your last tender ?—15th June, instant.

8. If a law such as it is proposed to enact, had been in force, what effect, in your opinion, would it have had on your tender ?—Not the slightest, as I look to this Island for my supply. I have seen no fat cattle landed here from Sydney.

9. *Mr. Williamson.*] Did your last tender exceed your earlier ones ?—No, it was lower than some of them. About six years ago I had the contract at 9d. per lb.

10. *Mr. O'Neill.*] At what rate was the contract taken before the arrival of the last two Regiments ?—5d. per lb. The retail price then was 7d. The present contract is 6½d., and the retail price 8d. per lb. The increase in price is owing to its being the winter months when meat is invariably dearer.

11. On what is your calculation based for stating that there are plenty of cattle in these islands to supply the market ?—From my own personal knowledge of the cattle in this and the Wellington districts, and from offers of cattle which have been made me.

12. In case restriction is placed on the importation of cattle, do you think the stock-holders would raise the price ?—I think not; they would be glad to find a market as they do not imagine the Troops will be retained here much longer, and I do not think any holders would attempt buying up cattle to create a monopoly.

13. *Mr. Williamson.*] Have you bought cattle from holders in the North ?—I have not, except a few that have been landed here.

14. Have you any idea of the number of cattle there ?—No, but I believe Mr. Williams at the Bay of Islands has about 200 head.

15. *Mr. McGlashan.*] When you say that the supply required is 100 head per week, does that number include the Commissariat demand as well as the town consumption ?—It does.

16. Could a year's supply at that rate be obtained from this Province ?—I think not.

17. *Chairman.*] Had you the contract in March last ?—I had ; and even if no more soldiers had come here I would have relinquished it.

The Witness was then discharged from further attendance.