

107. And had to fight the matter in the law-courts?—Yes.

108. Have the freezing company at any time sold meat in Wanganui?—No, not that I know of.

109. And, of course, they do not sell now?—No.

110. Was it not a threat from the freezing company that induced the butchers to give in—that they would sell in competition with the butchers if the abattoir were not established at Castlecliff?—Not that I am aware of. If you will allow me, it was a threat from the Corporation. The people determined to have an abattoir, and the Council gave us to understand that they would make arrangements for the abattoir and compel us to go there. It was not our own wish to go there.

111. It was not the wish of the butchers that they went there, and it is not in the interests of the grower or consumer. Is it not a well-known fact that the Wanganui Meat-freezing Company and the Castlecliff Railway Company are running this sort of thing in copartnership in order to please the general public?—No; I do not think there is anything of the kind.

112. *Mr. Flatman.*] Having been forced into the position—you have practically admitted you were forced into the position—of resorting to abattoirs, in your experience has not that been beneficial to yourself and the public?—Not to ourselves, but to the public.

WILLIAM J. GARRETT, of Wellington, representing thirty-two of the smaller butchers in the City of Wellington, some of whom killed for themselves and some of whom did not, said: The principal clauses we object to in the Bill is one that has already been gone over—I mean subclause (2) of clause 3—and I should like to support the objection to it that farmers should not kill or sell anywhere near large towns. I think the radius is rather small at present. I would prefer the radius to be extended a little. In clause 15 I should like to object to subsections (1), (2), and (3), because subsections (2) and (3) are partly bearing on (1). Then there is subsection (1) in clause 16. I object to the clause, “Subject to the provisions hereinafter contained relating to meat-export slaughterhouses,” and further down, in line 5, to the words “or for export.” And in clause 18 several object to it, and I would like to support them, and put in the words “practical workmen” instead of “his workmen.” I think, if a man is a good workman there should be no objection to him killing even in a public slaughterhouse.

113. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Are there licensed men?—Not at present.

*Witness* (continuing): The next clause to which I take exception is No. 19. I would like to add here that the license should be granted—that they would come under the Act provided they would be properly regulated as regards cleanliness, &c.

114. *Mr. Massey.*] What you suggest is this: No licenses except those already in existence, and a clause might follow that they should be properly inspected under proper regulations?—Yes.

*Witness* (continuing): In clause 24 I would support “for export only,” as the previous witness did; and in clause 26 I would support the previous witnesses in crossing out the words “human consumption throughout the colony,” so that it should read, “for export beyond the colony” only. Clause 30, I think, as regards Wellington, is very unworkable. A lot of our stock comes from a distance in the train, and you cannot distinguish the different brands; and even in the sale-yards here, with a small pen of thirty or forty sheep, you will see about a dozen or more different marks. Each particular sheep would have to be looked over. I think it is very unworkable, situated as we are here. In clause 31 I would like to cross out the words “and by any other person on payment of a fee of one shilling for each inspection.” I think no one but a Justice of the Peace or some other authorised person should be allowed to inspect any of the slaughterhouse books. With regard to clause 42, subclause (2), where it is made unlawful “to cut off, remove, or destroy any ear on such skin” the observing of that would be found troublesome. A slip of the knife might leave a portion of the ear on the head. In a large slaughterhouse it would be very troublesome. In clause 49, subclause (3) implies that we are not allowed to buy pigs from the farmers dead; they must be bought alive: and should they arrive here by train in the evening heated and knocked about, they are not fit to kill that night, and if they were, you could not salt the meat. That clause is very much against the butchers, and very strongly against the bacon-factories. Clause 56 I support as far as it goes, but I do not think it goes far enough. Not only the person who leases the slaughterhouse, but the person who has a freehold slaughterhouse, should have the same compensation if the license is abolished. Then, how will this Bill affect the Wellington butchers’ slaughterhouses? Clause 15, subclause (1), gives the local bodies power to delegate. By clause 19 their licenses are abolished. Clause 26 gives the meat-export companies power to kill their own meat for local consumption; therefore we might have to pay our fees to them: and that, we maintain, might create in Wellington a big trade monopoly, and wipe out all the smaller butchers. It would also make a monopoly in the purchasing, and of course it makes a difference to the small farmer. The export companies in buying their sheep go to the large runholders, because they have not the time to collect small parcels. And there are other small interests supported by the butchers. When I speak of the butchers I mean those who are slaughtering their own stock. Then, there are the dealers in sausage-casings, tallow, soap, and sheepskins, who depend on the butchers. If our slaughterhouses are abolished and are wiped out, these also must be wiped out, as they are living on us really. In a large slaughtering-place they monopolize everything, they utilise all the by-products. I believe these works round here utilise the blood and everything else. But the smaller butcher is also doing good work—especially those who have well-appointed slaughterhouses, like several who appeared before you yesterday. In Wellington we are slightly different from other places in having very little back country to draw our supplies from, and we have to kill a great deal of our meat from a distance. I am now killing meat from Te Aute, near Napier. These cattle are necessarily knocked about on the road, and if we all killed at one abattoir we would not have proper resting-places