

35. Would not that make considerable difference in the value of the animal?—Yes; but the same quantity of meat would be eaten in Wellington.

36. Supposing the inspection were equal in the abattoir and the freezing companies' works, would that objection still continue?—Yes, if the companies still bought as they do now. My idea is to see a larger number of men employed in local trade. I should like to see all the small butchers in Wellington working on their own account as master butchers, instead of buying their meat wholesale.

37. In other words, you are afraid of a monopoly?—I am afraid of monopoly. There are at present export companies doing a very large wholesale and retail trade in town.

38. Regarding compensation: It has been stated there are private slaughterhouses about Wellington that have cost a lot of money; is that so?—I do not know. I do not think there are any that have cost a large sum; my own are not expensive slaughterhouses. I keep them as clean and as tidy as I can, and on this account a little more expense is undoubtedly incurred.

39. *Mr. Flatman.*] With respect to rejects from the freezing companies: you have no doubt seen many of these. Is it not a fact that many of these occur through the bite of a dog or from bruises in transit?—Well, a large number of them are too fat to send Home, or they may be torn when being skinned, or yellow, or a bit too light. The majority are sheep not in sufficient condition for the Home market.

40. Being too fat would not make them unfit for human consumption?—Oh dear, no.

41. Have you any idea what causes the yellow colour, and are they fit for human food?—Well, I have been in nearly every part of New Zealand, principally managing station properties. I have heard argument on the subject of these yellow sheep for the last fourteen or fifteen years, and everybody has got a different opinion.

42. You would not object to a joint from a yellow sheep for your own dinner?—I would sooner not see it before it was cooked, but I do not think it diseased. That is a matter for an expert, however, and even he would have a difficulty over his decision.

43. You say freezing companies should buy closer. You do not think they at present buy fairly in your judgment?—They may buy fairly enough; but if buyers are limited to buying for export they will buy a much more even line.

44. That would be detrimental to the farmer, would it not?—No.

45. You were speaking of clause 3 just now. I understood you to say that a farmer, within three miles of a borough, would not be allowed to kill anything. Do you mean for his own consumption?—No; only for the town. A farmer five miles out from the city boundary can kill a certain quantity for sale in the town.

46. *Mr. Lang.*] I understood you to say that large companies were delivering meat in Wellington at lower prices than the stock could be bought for?—Not in the summer-time but during the winter, and at the present time, for instance.

47. How do you account for that?—Well, I presume they wish to keep the trade going; they therefore have to supply at a lower price now, and trust to making it up during the summer.

48. *Hon. the Chairman.*] What is the difference in value?—Experts state that at the local sale at Johnsonville and on the West Coast cattle are bringing, at any rate, £1 a hundred pounds. Beef is being delivered wholesale at present in Wellington at from 16s. to 17s. 6d. a hundred. This includes tongues, tripe, heart, tail, and that sort of thing thrown in.

49. How long has this been going on?—Only for a few weeks at the lower quotations, but practically the whole winter at the higher.

50. *Mr. Lang.*] Regarding compensation for slaughterhouses that would be closed, who do you think should pay such compensation?—As the Government were going to enforce the Bill, they should pay compensation.

51. Regarding compensation for condemned stock, you say it is unfair that the butchers should stand the loss?—Well, no one but an expert can tell whether the stock is diseased or not before it is killed. The butcher certainly should not bear it.

52. Then, in your opinion, who should bear the loss if they enforce the law?—As the stock were condemned for the benefit of those in the city, the local authority should undoubtedly pay such compensation, if they enforce the law. It is very hard if the farmer has to bear it, seeing that he is the backbone of the country. The auctioneer, again, would not sell if he had to give a guarantee, and in the end you would ruin the butcher if he had to bear it.

53. The provision regarding condemned meat, do not you think, is more in the interest of the people who have to eat it than any one else?—Yes; if you made the small butcher bear it, it would kill him.

54. *Mr. Symes.*] Are you acquainted with the prices of fat stock on the West Coast?—Well, I saw both beef and mutton sold on Thursday last at Palmerston North. I have bought considerable numbers of stock from the West Coast, and they have panned out very badly indeed lately.

55. You do not, of your own knowledge, know that beef is being bought up Taranaki way at from 10s. to 15s. a hundred?—I shall be very glad to deal with you if you can supply me at that price. I have had beef from Hawke's Bay and right from the other side of Wanganui, and the price was very much higher than that there.

56. You have spoken about the freezing companies entering into competition with the small butchers: Is it not a fact that one of the freezing companies is one of the oldest butchering businesses in Wellington?—Yes, I believe so.

57. Well, would it not be hard to shut these people up because they have increased their business?—Yes, but—

58. Will you say you would stop this man's business because he has added something to enlarge its ordinary revenue?—Well, he has become an export company, and the export company is quite sufficient to bring him in a large remuneration, and, without saying anything unkind of the