

any, more than for the whole carcase if frozen, leaving the balance of the carcase worth very much less.

32. Take the case of a sheep in the month of July at the price then ruling and the condition of the fleece then, what do you think is a fair estimate of the value of the by-products—such as inside fat, fleece, tongue, and so on?—I should say it would run out about 5s., covering everything of value.

33. It has been stated in evidence before this Committee by a number of witnesses that the experience of those who have refused to sell to the meat companies near Wellington, and have elected to send their stock to Christchurch to be sold at the Addington yards, is that they have received about half as much again as they were offered by the companies here. That is to say, that sheep offered at 10s. here have fetched 15s. there. It has also been stated that those sheep are not frozen in Canterbury, but are used for butchers' purposes. Are you aware that the price paid for meat in Christchurch by the consumer is more than it is here?—The consumer does, I believe, pay $\frac{3}{4}$ d. a pound more there.

34. You think that would account for the difference?—Yes. I understand that when sheep are shipped from the North to the South Island they are big heavy sheep that the butchers would compete for down there. But at the price paid for them by the butchers the freezing companies would not take them.

35. The evidence is that for fat, store, or any class of sheep that has been the experience, and it is indicated that there must either be a larger amount paid by the consumer there or that the butcher was paying too much, or less was being paid for it here?—There is no doubt that the butcher there pays a high price for his meat.

36. Then, the difference in a 60 lb. sheep would be about 3s. 9d.?—Yes.

37. *Mr. Haselden.*] Do you allow your buyers a margin to work on, or is the price fixed at the factory?—They are not allowed to go beyond a certain price without referring to us. The maximum price to be paid is given to our buyers, they using their own discretion entirely in buying; but before giving more than the maximum price arranged they must refer to the office. The price to be paid is altered by my directors from time to time, according to the price our mutton is selling at in London.

38. Do you buy anything that is fat, or is that left to them?—Yes, that is left to the buyers.

39. They would not give a maximum price for anything light: they would give what they consider value if they bought?—Yes.

40. You said that your company had no agreement with the companies?—Yes.

41. But the directors could make that agreement without your knowing it?—They could, but I do not think they have done so.

42. I have had three buyers at my place, and they all offered the same price?—The price is fixed on the basis of values at Home, and we are all, I presume, working on that basis.

43. Do your company ship direct Home on their own account or sell to the Tyser line?—We have sold none to the Tyser people. We sell to arrive, where possible.

44. What class of sheep do you prefer for freezing?—The crossbred to the Lincoln.

45. Crossed with what?—The Leicester we like. We do not get a big variety of crosses. I much prefer the Southdown and Down cross as a mutton sheep, but they, I understand, do not suit our country.

46. Crossed on the Mérimo?—We like the Merino foundation if we can get it.

47. What weights do you prefer?—55 lb. to 58 lb. is the sheep that sells best at Home—that is, speaking of those going from our works.

48. Then, can you explain to me why your buyers always pick out the 75 lb. to 80 lb. sheep?—Buying at per head they naturally take the heavy in preference to light sheep.

49. Would you give the seller the maximum price for a 55 lb. sheep?—Yes; the buyer will take a 55 lb. sheep if in condition. The grower would naturally object to buyers leaving sheep going to 55 lb. weight. We kill sheep under 50 lb. weight, and we have had any amount that would only average 52 lb. or 53 lb.

50. What do you do with the rejects: do you tin them down or sell them to the local butchers?—We sell some that are suitable to the butchers, and we bone the rest out. We have a contract for our preserved meat.

51. That meat goes to the tinning-works?—Yes.

52. Is it a fact that your works are sometimes unable to cope with the supply of sheep for the want of slaughtermen?—This last season we were hampered for that reason. We had to put on men we did not consider exactly suitable, and would not have employed them if we had been able to select others.

53. And can you get good men if you want them generally?—Yes; this last season only had we a little difficulty.

54. You said that the by-products were worth 5s. For a 60 lb. sheep that is only a penny a pound for the meat?—We do not get any 10s. sheep in July. I am taking our average for tallow at £1 15s. a hundredweight at Home.

55. *Mr. Lang.*] Are your buyers sent round the district from time to time, or do they only pay one visit during the season?—We expect our buyers to keep in touch with the growers, and, generally speaking, in the slack season they take a turn round before the season starts.

56. At the start of the season I suppose you send your buyers round first of all, and they buy the sheep that are fit for freezing, but do they then go round month after month?—Yes.

57. So long as you think the sheep are available?—Yes.

58. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] I suppose you know the history of your company pretty well?—Yes.

59. Are the directors farmers or business-men?—Some are farmers and some are business-men.