

With respect to bringing the output under one control, I think that is a matter that must be brought about in England. There is too much British capital in the trade to allow a colonial scheme to work successfully, at any rate, until a costly trade war had been fought over it; and before that was over I am afraid the farmer would be praying, "Save me from my friends." If the firms interested in the trade were to form a combine there might probably be some good done, but it would be mostly for themselves, and there would be the same cry against it as against the Millers' Trust here and all and sundry combines elsewhere.

With respect to more ports for delivery, it has always appeared to me that, with the great amount of energy and enterprise, and the unlimited capital in Britain seeking openings, if there was anything in it it would have been started long ago. I fancy that those in the trade must find it more economical to work from one centre.

I think the less the Government interfere with the industry the better for every one concerned. If they take a hand in it it means well-paid billets for a lot of men to do no good, and the farmer must ultimately pay for it. Take, for instance, the present inspection. The companies have to pay the Veterinary Inspectors. What benefit do they get? I should say, none. What benefit does the public get? Very little. If at Belfast or Islington you had a dozen Inspectors they could not thoroughly inspect every animal, and the ones they do not see are as likely to be wrong as the ones they do.

If the Government are in earnest to assist, let them start where they can do some good—in reducing freights. If a truck is wanted for five or six miles it is 15s.; too much. The stock goes by road in hot weather loses weight—a loss to owner, a loss to the railway. Take Rangiora—15s. to Belfast; thousands of fats go by road when they ought to go by rail at half the money, and pay both parties. Also, the railage to port ought to be greatly reduced, though that is more a Canterbury grievance.

D. Buddo, Esq.

Yours, &c.,

BRUN LISSAMAN.

SIR,—

Gore, 22nd September, 1902.

In reply to your letter of the 6th September, I have not had sufficient experience of the frozen-meat trade to give your Committee any information that would be of much use to them.

I think something could be done by the agents at Home combining to regulate the price according to supply and demand, and save one agent underselling another. I also think some reductions could be made in the railway freight, so as to land the meat on board steamers at as low a rate as possible consistent with paying a fair return to the railways.

Hoping your Committee will be able to do something to improve the frozen-meat trade.

Yours, &c.,

GEORGE MILNES,

Chairman, Agricultural and Pastoral Association, Gore.

Mr. Buddo, the Chairman, Frozen-meat Committee.

SIR,—

Porirua, 24th September, 1902.

I cannot attend to give evidence before your Frozen-meat Committee; but I will write you a few lines about the difference of the price of stock of the North Island compared with the South Island. It is an undeniable fact that the sheep in the South are worth 5s. to 6s. more than in this Island. They may be the same weight and quality, but still the difference exists. I am breeding lambs from half-bred Merino ewes and Southdown rams, and I can make them any weights from 30 lb. to 50 lb., and they are worth 10s., and in the South Island they are worth 15s. to 16s. each to go to the London market. We are as close to the London market as they are in the South Island, and should have as good appliances for freezing and sending to London as they have there; but still we cannot get the same price, because we are in the hands of two or three large companies that give every man the same price, no matter what the quality is. The man that goes to the expense of breeding and feeding to make good quality gets nothing extra for his trouble, and the companies get the benefit of his labour. This is a mistake that wants remedying. Every man should be paid according to the quality of the stock he produces.

You might ask the question, "Why don't you ship to London on your own account?" I may tell you you cannot get away from the monopoly by doing that, as the agents at the other end have more interest in the companies than the farmer. I have known a farmer's consignment of five hundred lambs landed in London when lambs were selling for 6d. per pound. It was held there for two months, and was sold for 4d. per pound, which made about 6s. a lamb difference, so we are in bondage in every way we move. I hope the Committee will try and relieve us of this bondage.

Yours, &c.,

Mr. Buddo, Chairman of Frozen-meat Committee.

J. MITCHELL.

SIR,—

Tomoana, Hawke's Bay, 22nd September, 1902.

Mr. Field asserted at my examination before the Frozen-meat Committee that "there was only $\frac{1}{4}$ d. difference between the cabled value of Canterbury and North Island mutton." I find on reference to my chart that for nine weeks last year the difference was 1d., for four weeks $\frac{1}{4}$ d., and