

here. I took the trouble to examine several lots in Canterbury, both alive and dead. The colour, and I believe the condition too, in some cases are both better; but take them as a whole I think there was a difference in favour of Canterbury in the appearance of the meat when it was hung up. Another thing is that they have more turnip-and-rape-fed sheep in Canterbury—there is more artificial feeding—and most farmers know that sheep turned off like that are of better quality.

17. Some of yours are from old pastures, when there in any feeding?—Where I am it is comparatively new pasture during the last ten years. The most of the pastures have been down during the last ten years.

18. We were considering that the land in Canterbury was getting very old, and that it wanted shaking up?—But you have such a large quantity of level country in Canterbury. Towards Gisborne there are some 70,000 acres of flat land, but when you get outside of that the amount of flat land is not a great deal. Therefore, we cannot go in for ploughing the same as they do in Canterbury and other places. I might say that they breed more for mutton in Canterbury than we do. We have been breeding more for wool up our way.

19. *Mr. Hornsby.*] Have the co-operative freezing-works made a start in your district?—Yes.

20. What sort of progress is it making?—Well, it worked for something over three or four months only last season. I believe they made a profit of £3,800.

21. That is an absolutely co-operative concern, is it not?—Yes.

22. It is owned and worked by the farmers?—Yes.

23. Has it had the effect of doing good to the farmers?—Yes; it had the effect of raising prices.

24. There is another company there, is there not?—Nelson's.

25. Did they raise the price after the co-operative company got into work?—They did.

26. I heard you say that you got 11s. for your lambs last year. What was the price before that?—I believe one year they paid 8s., but the year before they paid 10s.

27. So the result was 1s. higher last season?—Yes. I do not say the freezing-works caused them to give 1s. more, because they started to give that price before the works were open.

28. Will you give us some idea of the weights the buyers select when they come to take your lambs?—I do not know that I could for lambs. I have seen some that I should put down at from 35 lb. to 38 lb., and some went up to 40 lb. and 43 lb.

29. Is it fair to say that they will take all the big ones if they can get them?—Yes.

30. The biggest they can get?—Yes.

31. In buying sheep, do Nelson's buyers prefer the big sheep?—I have never seen them leave a large sheep to take a small one.

32. *Mr. T. Mackenzie.*] Would you say that the Co-operative Freezing Company has been a success?—So far, it has.

33. And the farmers are satisfied?—Oh yes, quite satisfied.

34. Do many of the farmers freeze and ship on their own account?—Very few have done it there. I think they are inclining towards adopting the system of shipping. I have known several this year do it, but before I hardly knew any one to do it.

35. And do you know if they are satisfied with the results?—Yes.

36. You do not know whether they intend to try shipping during the whole of the season, or merely to send occasional lines: do they send Home during the whole twelve months to get the good and bad markets?—Yes, I have known some of them to do so. There have been more sent Home since the new works were started than there were before.

37. Have you any idea as to whom they send their meat in the Old Country?—I know a couple of parties who send it through the Loan and Mercantile Company.

38. Are they agents for the co-operative company?—No. They have their own agents here.

39. Do you know to whom the co-operatives send their meat?—It is mostly sold in the colony.

40. They end their risk in the colony?—Yes.

41. Do you know what is considered prime lamb on the part of the buyers?—Of course, the weight will vary as the season progresses. If you take a lamb at the beginning of the season you will not expect him to be of the same weight as at the latter end of the season.

42. You do not know whether they have any favourite weights?—No, I do not.

43. Is there anything you would like to add to your evidence?—I do not know if I have anything to add.

44. *Mr. Haselden.*] Is there any competition for your sheep, or is the one price fixed?—There was some competition after the new works were opened.

45. Not before?—No.

46. What class of sheep do they get from you mostly—what breed?—The bulk of the sheep there is still into the Lincolns.

47. Has it ever been suggested to you or to other farmers that you should go into a different class of breeding?—Yes; a good many have tried to improve the meat for better mutton purposes.

48. What class do you go in for?—A good many have gone in for Romney Marsh sheep, and a good few are going in for the Shropshire now. There is a tendency in the whole district to get a better mutton-sheep and sheep with a better constitution.

49. Do you think it would be an advantage to the farmers generally if the works were entirely in their own hands and if they froze on their own account?—Yes, I think it would be.

50. *Mr. Flatman.*] You say that there is a difference in favour of Canterbury mutton against North Island mutton: how much per head as a freezer would you consider the difference is?—It was more the appearance of the sheep as if hung up in the works, and even in the shops in the city,