287. The price has gone up, then?—Yes.

288. What would you consider the early part of the season?—January and February.

289. Wheat in February of this year was 4s. 9d.?—That was old wheat.

290. Is not this the average price of wheat given in your return?—No.

291. What have you quoted in these figures?—The prices at which we bought.

292. Does it represent the prices of wheat in the months quoted, or something else?—It represents the price we paid for wheat in the month mentioned; but you must understand that wheat bought in February, if bought for immediate delivery, would be old wheat.

293. Is this table reliable? You quote here a period of several years, and you have stated under each month the price of wheat at a certain figure: is that reliable, or is it incorrect?—It is reliable as far as our books are concerned. It was the price we paid for it in those months.

294. Then, in February, 1903, you paid 4s. 9d. for wheat?—Yes, for old wheat.

295. Was this the market price in February, 1903?—I do not say it is the market price.

296. Do you say clearly that this return does not indicate the market price of wheat for the months given?—The figures represent the market price of wheat that we paid.

297. Very well, in February the market price was 4s. 9d. per bushel?—That was for old wheat. There was a great difference between the price of old and new wheat. The old wheat we were able to use immediately, while the other wheat we did not get delivery of perhaps until March or later.

298. In September, 1903, wheat was quoted at 3s. 10d.: is that old or new wheat?—That would be new wheat.

299. In September, 1902, the price of wheat was quoted at 4s.—2d. more than this year in the same month?—Yes.

300. The difference in the figures in your return for September, 1903, is given at £1 10s. as compared with a difference of £2 11s. for September, 1902: can you tell us what the net profits would be for those months?—I could not say.

301. You were making more profit in 1902 than in 1903?—Yes.

302. The competition between the free mills was not so keen in 1902?—Not to the same extent as it is at the present time.

303. What is the normal capacity of your mill?—Fifteen sacks an hour.

304. Running twenty-four hours a day that is its capacity?—Yes.

305. Your output running full time would be over 13,000 tons per annum?—Yes.

306. What are you turning out now on an average?—Somewhere about 5,000 tons a year.

307. And you could turn out if running twenty-four hours a day over 13,000 tons a year?—Yes.

308. Before the association was formed you practically worked twenty-four hours a day?—No.

309. How many hours did you run on an average?—I could not tell you; I have no data to go by.

310. Before the association started did you put out more than you are doing now?—Some years we did.

311. On an average how much more?—About 1,000 tons more in the year.

312. Then your output has been restricted to the tune of about 1,000 tons a year through your joining the association?—Yes, it has; and other mills have reaped the advantage of my smaller output. The association has reduced my average output in order to give some of the other mills a fair share of the work.

313. Do you know Steven and Co., millers, in Dunedin?—Only by name.

314. Their representative gave evidence that their normal output was 530 tons monthly, but that they were restricted to 180 tons per month?—I should doubt the correctness of that statement.

315. Assuming the statement to be correct, do you not think the association unduly restricted the output?—No, I do not; I think they have worked fairly for all the mills, giving them all a proportion of the requirements of the trade.

316. Supposing that in your case the operations of the association have only restricted your output by one-sixth of what it was formerly, and in the case of Steven and Co. they have reduced it from 530 tons to 180 tons a month, how can you explain that, because the quota should be evenly distributed?—I do not believe the association have done that.

317. Are you a member of the Millers' Association?—My firm is, and I represent the firm.

318. Were you ever on the price committee of the Bakers' Union in Christchurch?—No.

319. What member was?—I do not remember that any member of my firm was.

320. Do you know that one of your sons sat as a representative of the millers with the price committee of the Bakers' Union?—No, I would not say as a representative of the millers.

321. What did he sit as—a representative butcher?—He would not represent the butchers.

322. He would probably represent the millers?—I do not think the millers were represented in this way, that they had a vote in regulating the price of bread.

323. I am reading now Rule 11 of the Canterbury Master Bakers' Union: "A price and appeal committee, consisting of three millers and three bakers, shall be elected to hold office for twelve months, and shall be elected by ballot from the whole of the members of the union, their duties being to determine the price of bread from time to time, and to settle any disputes that may arise. The chairman at all meetings to be a miller." Did you know of that rule?—No, I was not aware of it.

324. Now being aware of it, do you say that any miller sitting there would not represent the millers?—Well, I would suppose that he would represent the millers if he were sitting there.

325. Do you know that your son sat there?—I believe he did, but I do not know that he did. I should suppose that he did.