

86. Have you considered whether it is advisable to send chilled meat from Australia and New Zealand, as is done from the Argentine?—No; I think the journey is too long.

87. How long was it from the Argentine for that chilled cargo which was sent?—It was nineteen days. All the chilled meat has been sent in mail-steamers, and they take nineteen to twenty days from Buenos Ayres.

88. Are you correct in that statement?—I was seven years in that trade. No frozen meat is sent in the mail-steamers—it is only the chilled meat.

89. How long is it since you gave up your seafaring life?—About fifteen years. The contracts are given to the Royal mail steamers for all chilled meat. The majority of this chilled meat is sent in such steamers as the Thames, Danube, Orinoco.

90. What effect on prices will the establishment of the seven companies you spoke of have?—I believe the competition will be very severely felt, and that it will bring down the values of land here.

91. Do you think the price will be lowered for Argentine meat?—Yes.

92. And of course that will affect our position?—Yes; that will follow.

93. Is New Zealand meat suitable for the North of England trade?—I have been generally told the other way—that they want lean meat.

94. I mean the trade about the manufacturing districts?—Yes; they like lean meat there.

95. What chances do you think there would be of establishing the New Zealand meat there and displacing Argentine meat in the north of England?—I do not think you have the least show. I think you are in for a terrible fight with them.

96. You think the working-classes—the operatives and those working in the factories—prefer the lean meat?—Yes.

97. Do you think it is possible to reach the middle-class of people in the north of England with our meat?—I think it is very possible.

98. I mean by opening shops and displaying it under very favourable conditions?—But you are going to have the better class of meat from some other country sold at 1d. or 2d. a pound less alongside. You want to know if there is not a market for the better class of meat. I say there is, but directly you start, the Argentine companies will start against you.

99. Do you think the Argentine suppliers would cut below cost and beat New Zealand in the competition?—The Argentine people have such a big margin between profit and loss that they would make a little profit and you would make a loss.

100. Is your opinion, if a good shop were opened showing the best New Zealand meat, that the Argentine would send its best meat there and destroy the chance of success?—I am quite certain they would.

101. Have you ever considered Lord Winchelsea's system of supplying British farmers' produce direct to buyers in Long Acre, London? I went there and saw his shop?—Yes.

102. What was the result of that?—Our London correspondent, referring to New Zealand's proposal to open meat-shops, writes as follows:—"There is some little parallel between this scheme and Lord Winchelsea's plans to help the native producers, plans which ultimately brought him to an untimely end owing to failure and the base ingratitude of the people he intended to benefit. He established a store in Long Acre to be supplied with goods from farmers and English producers only; the enterprise was short-lived, mainly for two reasons: it was worked on a too expensive scale, and the producers failed to support it."

103. If a plan for establishing shops in England were adopted, would you consider it advisable to establish them on a wide principle or to open just a few?—I have read the scheme pretty fully, and I think the bigger the scheme the more expense it would be to the taxpayer, and consequently the smaller the scheme the less expense. I believe it all means a dead loss to the taxpayer.

104. You think it would not be successful?—I do not see how you could make a profit out of it, and I think you will make a big loss. It means a splendid advertisement, but a very expensive one, in my opinion. It seems to me that you will benefit your opponents as much as yourselves, as it will be an advertisement for all.

105. Do you not think our best meat is so good that people would stick to it in preference to Argentine meat?—No; I consider the best class of Argentine meat is quite as good as New Zealand meat.

106. This may be considered a delicate question, but I would like to ask, have you any personal interest in the Argentine?—Could I have any personal interest if I strongly advocate the English Government putting 1d. a pound on their meat and 1d. a pound on butter? The whole of my interests are here, and my favourite country in the world is New Zealand, except one. I am very glad to get the opportunity of saying this to you, that my favourite country, next to England, is New Zealand, and my whole interests are bound up in the colonies. I say that preferential trade is our safety, and that it means handicapping the Argentine.

107. If New Zealand meat is not much superior to Argentine, how is it that they are always trying to sell Argentine meat as New Zealand?—I have heard many reports about that, but I think your policy is to sell your meat whether it be as prime English or anything else. It does not matter who takes it—sell it.

108. Would you approve of branding the meat?—Distinctly not.

109. Do you not think that by selling the best of New Zealand as something else New Zealand loses?—Distinctly not. If I had a mutton-chop on my table with the brand on it, I should be ashamed of myself, and I think my visitors would also be ashamed of it. People do not want their friends to know that they are getting frozen meat. As I said before, we will not touch frozen meat in Australia, and why should the English people want frozen New Zealand meat in preference to English?