

59. But you do not know to what amount?—I have no means of knowing that.

60. You say in your report, "Purchasers having so frequently to make genuine claims gradually began to make them on all purchases of shipments." I understand from that that there are still a great many carcasses coming in damaged?—I say "gradually began." I am giving the reason why claims for damage used to be so frequent, and I think you will see that I say the damage is now much less.

61. You say at the end of the 3rd clause "So that, owing to this diversity of opinion, the damage continues"?—I say so still; but not to the same extent as a few years ago.

62. You also say, "As I have occasionally heard of claims being made on sheep which I had seen delivered from the ship, and which I was satisfied were then in perfect condition, I have made inquiry concerning this. I have found that damage had been occasioned after the mutton had left the ship and while in transit to the stores." Do you think there was actually that damage on the meat?—I consider that under the system of transit from the ship's side to the up-river stores there is a great possibility of damage occurring.

63. I want to know whether the damage was really on the sheep?—I am satisfied there was no damage when they left the ship, but the damage must have occurred afterwards. I only saw the sheep after their discharge from the ship. I did not see them when they were assessed in the stores.

64. Have you seen an assessment going on in the stores?—I have.

65. Are you satisfied that the sheep were damaged?—Sometimes; but I have seen an assessment at which, if acting for the insurance companies, I would have refused to allow the claim which was granted.

66. Have you ever heard of the slightest difficulty on the part of buyers getting full allowance for meat when it was shown on the hooks?—No; I am under the belief, from what I have known, that damage was given at Smithfield for meat on the hooks perhaps rather too readily.

67. Would you consider the system of assessing now on the thirty days is better than the old system of assessing after the meat was exposed at Smithfield?—I do not think there is any assessing after the meat has been exposed at Smithfield.

68. Would you be surprised to learn that there was not half the damage paid under those conditions than there is under the thirty days?—It may be so.

69. Have you no suggestion to make as to placing the system of insurance on a better basis?—I have already made a suggestion.

70. Would you not suggest that salaried assessors be appointed, and that the names of these men be embodied in the insurance policy, that the meat sold should be subject to that, and that an arbitrator outside of Smithfield should be the final court of appeal?—Is that not to some extent done now? The assessor is often nominated by the shipper.

71. No; the system just now is for an assessor to be called in, and if the buyer is not satisfied and an arbitrator is required, he can appoint his neighbour, who may desire a return of the favour to come in and arbitrate the damage; and I do not think that system is a good one. Have you any idea what some of these butcher assessors make per week?—No.

72. Would you be astonished to learn that they make sometimes as much as £40 per week?—I would like to have that myself.

73. *Mr. Hogg.*] You say there is ample cold-storage in the Old Country if full advantage were taken of the accommodation in the principal towns. How is this storage supplied—is it by public or private enterprise?—Most of the stores are held by private companies. One or two have been erected by Corporations—as, for instance, the Manchester Corporation.

74. Can you say why advantage is not more freely taken of this accommodation?—I consider it is because the agents handling New Zealand meat in the Old Country have their interests almost entirely in London, and they desire to have the meat on the spot for easily handling directly by themselves.

75. Would the distribution of our meat elsewhere than in London prevent the occasional gluts to which you refer?—Certainly I think so.

76. Then you think these gluts are almost entirely due, not to the overstocking of the market by bringing in more meat than sufficient for the wants of the consumers, but to the bad system of distribution?—Oh no; I consider the gluts are caused by the irregular shipments from the colony. Sometimes the meat is in very short supply. At other times it is sent forward in larger quantities than the market can consume, when it has to be placed in the cold-stores and held. One then hears of the want of storage, in consequence of the glut, in London.

77. Then there is no necessity for the New Zealand Government to provide cold-air stores in Great Britain—there is ample storage?—There is ample. I do not think the Government requires to provide more storage, or to assist others in erecting it, in Great Britain.

78. The cold-air stores you refer to being chiefly in the hands of private individuals, do you think the producers would derive any advantage if the New Zealand Government were to provide ample accommodation in the colony, so that the meat could be stored here in order that the supply might be regulated from month to month?—I have already said that I am in favour of storing the meat in this country in preference to sending it Home in large quantities, and having to store it in England.

79. Then you think the prevention of glutting might be carried out better and more economically in New Zealand at the ports of departure than in London, or in any part of the Old Country?—Certainly.

80. *Mr. Buchanan.*] What is the rate of storage charged on meat in London?—The ninth of a penny per pound for four weeks. Some stores charge $\frac{1}{8}$ d., but $\frac{1}{10}$ d. is what is generally accepted. You might get it down to $\frac{1}{10}$ d. perhaps by arrangement.

81. Having been on the spot for such a long time, have you not got more accurate information