

31. *Dr. Newman.*] Do you freeze for Sims, Cooper, and Co.?—Yes.

32. Is it a fact that the large freezing agents are taking steps to combine and squeeze out the small farmer from the works?—We take care that nothing of that sort happens with us.

33. *Mr. Talbot.*] You said your company was started to protect the farmer—protect him against what?—Against any combination which would prevent his having a free market. Our object has been to keep what I have called the open door for the farmer, in order that he may send in his produce to be frozen by us and consign it to anybody in London whom he may select.

34. So that if the Meat Trust got a hold that open door would still be there in the case of your company?—It is our intention to carry on our present policy and keep that door open at all hazards.

35. Does it not appear to you that the rebate system might lead to such a firm as Armour and Co. getting hold even of your company?—I do not think so, because if any inconvenience resulted therefrom we should take very good care that the system stopped.

36. It is not a secret rebate, but a concession which is given to any client who operates largely?—Yes, it is known throughout the trade.

37. You are not concerned with the shipping part of the business?—That is not in our province.

38. Have you any knowledge of any freezing-works getting more ewe and lamb away than they ought to be doing in spite of the fact that the Home Government have asked for wethers and beef?—No, I have no knowledge of that. The only case in which I have heard of such a thing happening was where the beef and wether mutton was exhausted in a certain works, and it became necessary to give that particular works some latitude in order to enable them to satisfy their clients. If they had any beef that beef had to be shipped before any lamb was shipped; but sometimes for the benefit of the district and in order to keep the trade going it has been necessary to give some relief of that sort.

39. In other words, when your works have lambs and not much mutton and beef, you are allowed to send them away?—Yes, I have heard of cases of that sort.

40. You have not heard of cases where some works have not been allowed to send prohibited meat away while others have?—No, I have not heard of any accusations of unfairness in that connection.

41. *Mr. Anderson.*] You said that your company gives a rebate to certain clients: do you give a special rebate to Armour and Co.?—No.

42. You have not been approached by Armour and Co. or Sims, Cooper, and Co. for a special rebate?—No.

43. *Mr. W. H. Field.*] What companies do you call the American companies?—Armour and Co. and Swift and Co. There may be others, but that is what I mean by the American companies.

44. You do not regard Sims, Cooper, and Co. as belonging to the American Meat Trust?—I do not know anything about their affairs—I have not inquired into their concern.

45. You have frozen for Armour and Co. and Sims, Cooper, and Co.?—Yes, but we have not frozen for Swift and Co. I do not think we have ever had any produce sent to us in the name of Swift and Co.

46. What is the minimum per sheep or bullock on which you allow this discount?—I could not tell you.

47. But it is only one discount—it is not a graduated scale?—No.

48. You have agents in London, but not agents for the sale of meat?—Not agents for the sale of meat, no.

49. You do not undertake any agency in respect of the sale of meat?—No, when clients ask our company to send produce Home we do so for them—we consign it to some firm of meat salesmen.

50. *Mr. Witty.*] But having done that you are finished with it?—Yes. If a farmer wants us to do that we send to either our ordinary agent or one of the ordinary brokers, and charge commission.

51. You freeze for farmers or any one in rotation according to the time they put the stuff in?—That is so.

52. You make no difference whether it is a large or small client?—Yes, we do; we differentiate in favour of the small man always.

53. You allow the farmer also, if he chooses, to take away his wool or his fat?—That is so; he can take the whole skin away and deal with it himself, but not the fat, because we buy that off him.

54. Could you give the Committee a rough idea of the quantity of sheep that Sims, Cooper, and Co. put through your works in, say, twelve months?—No, but I could get the information for you. One does not carry those figures in one's head.

55. *Mr. Forbes.*] Have you given any thought to the matter of the American Meat Trust getting possession of the trade in New Zealand?—I cannot say I have studied the matter very much.

56. You have followed the working of the frozen-meat trade very closely, have you not?—Yes.

57. You know there are fears that the American Meat Trust will get command of this market to the detriment of the producer: have you given any thought to that question?—I do not think it is possible. I think it will be the producer's own fault if it does.