

43. Would you be surprised to learn that they only shipped from the Dominion £437,981 worth of meat?—I have no knowledge of their operations outside the Auckland District.

44. There are companies like the New Zealand Refrigerating Company sending over £3,000,000 worth, and Borthwick and Sons over £1,500,000 worth of meat away. How would you compare their operations with Sims, Cooper, and Co.?—I should think Sims, Cooper, and Co. exported more than that from what I have heard of their operations.

45. Do you think the figures I have mentioned do not disclose the true position as regards the operations of Sims, Cooper, and Co.?—I would only guess they did not, but I have no means of knowing.

46. Do you know that they are operating in any other form, breeding ewes for farmers on the understanding that they are to get the lambs?—Yes, we have heard rumours of that.

47. *Mr. T. A. H. Field.*] What makes you think the trusts are operating in New Zealand?—Armour and Co. are supposed to be one of the trust. They have put through our works this season over £23,000 worth of stock.

48. But outside of Armour and Co.?—There is the usual suspicion that a firm is acting for Swift and Co., but whether they are or not I cannot say.

49. *Mr. Scott.*] Have you much meat in store?—About 150,000 carcasses.

50. What is your capacity?—Our total capacity is over 500,000 carcasses in 60 lb. carcasses.

51. But no preference has been shown so far as you know in getting away your meat?—No, we have nothing to complain of on that head. Of course, we do not know of the exact proportions we are entitled to of the allotment, because we do not know what meat they have in other works. We think it would be a good thing to make that public or let the freezing companies know. I do not know the reason why the freezing companies should not get that information.

52. Have you any complaint to make against those who control the shipping of your meat?—No.

53. *Dr. Newman.*] What buyers in the southern half of this Island operate in your province?—Borthwick and Sons is a southern firm; Sims, Cooper, and Co.; R. and F. Wallis bought a few cattle last year; and A. H. Turnbull and Co.

54. And the Wanganui Meat Company?—Yes, and the Patea Meat Company. The New Zealand Refrigerating Company is the Wanganui company to which I refer.

55. Does the Patea Meat Company operate up your way?—I am not quite clear whether they have been operating recently.

56. *Mr. Talbot.*] In regard to the cutting-up of carcasses and packing them in the works, are you adopting that system in the coming season?—Yes, we propose to do what we can to assist in that way.

57. Have you considered the proposal of cutting the meat down lengthways and stacking it?—No.

58. *Mr. Anstey.*] You told us just now that Armour and Co. froze some £23,000 worth of stock with your firm this last year?—Beef, mutton, and lamb.

59. You received from the Imperial Government £535,000?—Yes.

60. Is that amount you froze for Armour and Co. included in that amount?—Yes.

61. This £535,000 which you received was on behalf of various shippers, and in turn you handed it on to them?—Yes.

62. Armour and Co. are stated to have received only £340,000 from the whole of the Dominion, and they received from you alone, what?—From the 1st August, 1916, to 1st July, 1917, they received £23,951.

63. We have produced a list showing the payments made by the Department to various shippers. [*Vide Appendix D.*] It shows that the payment made by the Department itself to Armour and Co. is £74,000, and in addition to that Armour and Co. would have in that item of yours of £535,000 an amount of £23,000?—No; the £23,000 would be included in the £74,000. Armour and Co. would have been paid that £74,000 direct.

PATRICK ST. STEPHEN CARROLL examined. (No. 20.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—Managing secretary of the Taihape Freezing works.

2. Who owns the Taihape works?—It is a limited company—a co-operative farmers' company.

3. Is the capital entirely New Zealand capital?—Yes.

4. Does the company buy?—Yes, we bought last year.

5. What proportion of your turnover would you say the company buys?—Last year 90 per cent. of it was bought by the company.

6. You do not freeze for large buyers at all?—Not to any extent. Last year Sims, Cooper, and Co. were the principal people we froze for, but what they put through was very small: it was only what was nominated by the shareholders of the company. It was bought by them from farmers on condition that it was to be put through our works.

7. Does your company nominate in London?—Yes, to Nevanas and Co., who are agents for the company, and they get all the nominations.

8. Do you get any advantage from the nominations as a company?—No.

9. Do you give rebates to the companies or farmers for whom you freeze?—No, not so far.

10. Have you been asked to give any rebates to any companies?—Not as far as I know. You will understand that I have only just taken up the position of managing secretary of the company—only six weeks ago. No rebates have been given, and as far as I know none have been asked.