

£10,000 worth. The work in this industry is suitable for returned men. The industry would start under new conditions; there would be no old-fashioned trade customs to contend against.

*To Mr. Hornsby.*] About a month after peace was declared the American manufacturers took off their advance in price, but the English manufacturers put up their price about Christmas-time.

*To Mr. Hudson.*] The English manufacturers, I suppose, have done so well during war-time that they thought they would continue it for some time longer, and they have lost the motor-car-tire business.

A. W. PURVES, Canterbury Freezing-works and Related Trades Employees' Industrial Union of Workers, examined. (No. 47.)

As a member of the Canterbury Freezing-works and Related Trades Employees' Industrial Union of Workers, and as a worker in the industry, I wish to draw your attention to the fact that the wool-scouring industry with the assistance of a little legislation in the right direction can and should be developed into one of the most important in the Dominion, and instead of employing the handful of men as at present it can be made to employ hundreds more, and so give healthy and congenial occupation to a great number of our returning soldiers. The custom in the past has been to export all classes of wool irrespective of quality or condition. Probably those engaged in the exportation of wool had legitimate reasons for starving the industry, as they had to contend with obstacles, such as lack of machinery, unsuitable and uncertain weather for drying purposes; but with the modern machinery now used for scouring and drying purposes these obstacles are completely swept away. All the machinery required to scour and dry wool is made in New Zealand. The position as it exists at present is most unsatisfactory, as these figures will show: Wool exported in grease per year, 428,957 bales; wool exported scoured per year, 49,503 bales; amount of wool exported suitable for scouring, 100,000 bales; saving on freight charges on that amount if grease and dirt were removed—which is estimated at 40 per cent.—£200,000. The freight charges are based on the rates prevailing when private firms were last allowed to ship wool. Another strong reason why our wool should be scoured locally is to prevent deterioration. Sometimes it is not convenient or wise to place certain wools on the market, as there is little or no demand for same, which naturally makes it necessary to store; and if the wool is stored containing a large percentage of foreign matter it has a tendency to deteriorate; on the other hand, if the wool is free from foreign matter when shipped it will keep for years without any danger of depreciation. This point should not be lost sight of, the importance of which is made manifest when you realize the loss sustained on millions of pounds' worth of wool owing to fall in value due to deterioration. Another reason why wool should be scoured locally is that if more wool were scoured more grease would be obtainable, which fact would offer inducement to create another industry by the manufacture of lanoline from the grease which is now wasted. In my opinion, the lanoline industry has not developed because the methods adopted to deal with collecting and refining the grease are far from perfect, but with assistance from the Government by way of subsidy to those making genuine efforts to develop the industry, and more grease offering, valuable results would be obtained, though I would suggest that lanoline is a matter that scientific research could be applied to. There are no obstacles to overcome to develop the wool-scouring industry, as everything required is produced in the Dominion, and with the improvements in the modern drying-machine the old prejudice against artificially dried wool is fast disappearing, and with a standard drying-machine of a certain type the danger of damage to the wool by overheating can be completely removed. I would suggest that the quickest and surest method to adopt to give this important industry the required stimulus would be the prohibition of exportation of all wools suitable for scouring. The Gisborne Woolbrokers' Association in January last forwarded a protest to the Minister of Imperial Government Supplies against the shipment from Gisborne of a thousand bales of scouring-wool, which it was contended could be easily handled locally. Its shipment elsewhere represented a loss to the Imperial authorities of 10s. per bale.

F. C. ELLIS, Canterbury Freezing-works Union of Workers, examined. (No. 48.)

In connection with the machinery used for wool-scouring and treating wool, I desire to say that a few years ago it was very out of date. Now they have much improved machinery. There is objection in some quarters to artificial drying. By putting on too great heat it deteriorates the wool; but satisfactory results are obtained by applying lesser heat and letting the wool stay in the proper time. The industry of wool treating or scouring can be extended, and very little training is needed. I may point out that the technical schools are training large numbers of persons in the classing of wool. The work can be carried on all the year. It is, in fact, being worked for about nine months in the year under the present system; it ceases for a couple of months before the shearing-season. A by-product of wool-scouring is lanoline, which is worth £16 a ton. There is sufficient output to establish a fresh industry in this country, and thus save the cost of importing lanoline. Lanoline is an extremely expensive article.