

for this purpose that it would have been for growing sheep or cattle. Live-stock production is not by any means dead, as some of our enemies want to make believe. In 1917 in the principal United States markets over twelve million cattle were marketed. It was the largest in the history of the country, and in spite of this there were more cattle alive on the farms at the end of the year than there was at the commencement. The exports of fresh beef increased from 6,400,000 lb. in 1914 to 231,000,000 lb. in 1916. The exports of bacon in the same period increased from 194,000,000 lb. to 667,000,000 lb.; and the total export weight of beef products from the United States in 1917 was 411,000,000 lb., and the weight of pork products 1,500,000,000 lb. The latest return published by the United States Bureau of Statistics in January, 1918, estimated the number of cattle at that time at 66,830,000 head, an increase of 3,100,000 over the previous year's total of 63,700,000, and 18·2 per cent. more than the low-water mark in 1913. Sheep were returned at 48,900,000 head, as compared with 48,500,000 at the end of 1916. These are the latest figures available, but are sufficient to show that steady progress is being made in stock-raising in the United States, and certainly disproves the statement that America to-day is depleted of all live-stock owing to the packers putting them out of business. Another misstatement made by one of the members of Parliament who has been touring New Zealand in the matter now before you is that what Armour and Co. really wanted was a license to kill. This is absolutely not so. What we want is a license to export, and not to kill or build freezing-works. We do not own shares in any freezing-works, and do not think the directors of any company would transfer any shares to us even if we made application. Knowing Mr. Armour and his associates as I do, I am sure the statement that one paper in America was receiving £1,000 per year is false. It seems the impression of at least one member of your Committee that Mr. Armour would do business in New Zealand without my company's knowledge. I would like to emphasize the fact that these are not Mr. Armour's tactics, and I can assure the Committee that Armour and Co. do absolutely nothing in New Zealand but what is done through Armour and Co. of Australasia (Limited). Armour and Co. do not own any retail shops in any part of the world. Also, there are more packing plants outside of Chicago (notwithstanding the statement by Mr. Lysnar in one of his speeches in Gisborne). The Federal Trade Commission which was appointed by the President of the United States in 1917 to inquire into the food situation appeared to do nothing but investigate the packers and no one else; and yet none of the heads of the big packing firms or their representatives were ever called to give evidence, and were never given a chance to challenge or correct the mistaken inferences made. A great many producers and others are under the impression that Mr. Armour gave evidence before this Federal Trade Commission. This is not so. The only evidence he ever gave was before the Inter-State Committee, which is entirely different. It was very clear from the outset that this Commission was out to do everything possible to injure the packers. They stopped at no violation of principles and justice to accomplish their end, their one idea seeming to be to get an indictment against the packers. The report presented as a result of this Commission was the sort of thing one would expect. They knew nothing about the packing industry, its problems or operations, or of modern business, and the report was concocted from hearsay and incorporative gossip. They recommended that the President should take over the packing-houses; but when it was brought up in the Senate they absolutely refused to discuss it, but denounced the Commission as one of the most unfair pieces of political propaganda that had ever been perpetrated on commerce; and Senator Gore, who was put forward as the proposer of this legislation, voluntarily withdrew his appeal and put it in the waste-paper basket. And yet the only reason given by the Government of New Zealand for not granting us a license to export was that they had come to this decision after reading the summary of the report of the Federal Trade Commission on the meat-packing industry. As a matter of fact, no one ever heard of the Federal Trade Commission before it attempted to get a blow at the big packers, and if they and our competitors can put the packers out of business (and many competitors would like to see Armour and Co.'s business destroyed) they would be hailed as public benefactors, not because of any service really done the producers and the public, but because they had been after Armour and Co. so long that the refusing of our license would be celebrated by them as a national victory. We have heard a great deal against the American companies in the Argentine, but Argentine producers are getting far better prices for their stock to-day than are obtaining here in New Zealand. Before the introduction of the large American packers to the Argentine refrigeration was practically unknown, and there was practically nothing but meat-drying establishments. To-day it is the most important beef-producing country in the world, and its market is assured by the fact that the large American packers have been able to bring to it their huge organizations to develop the country. The American freezing companies in the Argentine are helping to improve the breed of the live-stock. They buy purebred animals and distribute them through the country to the farmers at cost price, and New Zealand will have to look out or she will find that South America will surpass her in the quality of her meat on the consuming markets of the world. The producer in South America—that is, the grower—has no direct concern in the frozen-meat trade, but sells his stock to the freezing buyers, and there is an end of it; but here in New Zealand the grower, whether he sends or sells his stock on the spot, takes a keen and personal interest in all stages through which his meat passes. The freezing-works in the Argentine are never closed except for repairs, and the producers are quite prepared to sell, and do not try to embarrass companies by any interference; and the fact that the whole of the operations from the killing of the stock to the selling of the meat have been mainly in the hands of commercial companies has been greatly in their favour. This control makes it a comparatively easy task for them to compete successfully with New Zealand. If the New Zealand farmer desires to compete in a really effective manner with their South American rivals in the struggle for world's markets, more attention should be devoted to consolidation of efforts—not to have more freezing-works, but to combine some of those already in operation. Further, if the farmers of New Zealand could modify their present system of breeding and feeding so that the freezing-works could run nine months in the year instead of six, as has been brought about in the Argentine by an intelligent system of breeding and feeding, they would then be in a position to compete much better with other producing countries. This is really a very important point, and it is hard to find any reason why it cannot be done. You have all undoubtedly heard a great deal about how, when the American packers entered the Argentine, they were supposed to have forced prices up, and after they got control prices dropped. There has never been a time since