42. It resolves itself into this: that if butter was 1s. 9d. for export, or 1s. 3d., it could be sold for 1s. 3d. here?—Certainly; if you are going to take up the stand that while butter is 2s. 6d. per pound in England we should sell it for 1s. 6d. here, then when butter-prices fall the Government would be logically bound to keep it up to 1s. 6d. here.

43. Dairying would still be carried on if butter fell to 1s. 6d. per pound, and things would balance themselves up and land-values would come back to normal?—Yes; but that also affects other produce. Of course, butter has been controlled recently, and we have in our district a Glaxo factory which has not been controlled, and the farmers in our district have been going to the Glaxo factory, where they could get a higher price for their butterfat. If the price of butterfat does not go up the same as cheese, the tendency will be for the producers to go out of butter into other products to get the best return.

44. The sum and substance of it is this: that the dairy-farmers can get a certain price for export, and what justification has the Government or the Committee to say they should not be treated the same as any other producer in the Dominion, up to a point?—Yes.

45. And all this price-chasing so far as the cost is concerned is all moonshine?—That is my opinion.

46. *Mr. Powdrell.*] Do the farmers have to work overtime—that is, before 8 in the morning and after 5 at night?—Yes.

47. And on Sundays?—Yes. The farmer is in the position that he has to be there morning and night. He could get away in the middle of the day very often.

48. What time do you start in the morning?—The men start about 6 o'clock, and finish about half-past 6 or 7 at night.

49. And work on all holidays and Sundays?—Yes. They do not work all the day—they have an interval between.

50. *Mr. Kellett.*] How many hours a day would they work?—The hours they actually work would be about nine hours a day.

51. *Mr. Powdrell.*] Do you consider it would be right and reasonable that those working in the dairy industry should have equal rates of pay with the waterside workers, and do you consider the work of milking by hand is as hard as the work performed by waterside workers?—I do not mind answering the question, but I do not think it has any bearing. As to whether the farmer should have the same pay as the waterside worker, I think most farmers make more pay than the waterside worker.

52. That is, the man milking the cows?—In the case of the share milker and the working farmer, possibly they do not get the same for the same number of hours, but I think every one is entitled to the same rate of pay supposing they are working under the same conditions.

53. You consider that the farmer milking the cows and the owner are entitled to the same rate of pay as the freezing-works hands who get 15s. 10d. a day for pasting labels and painting tins?—Yes, I should think so.

54. And if the workers on the wharf are getting 4s. 4d. per hour overtime on Saturdays and 5s. per hour on Sundays, would you consider it reasonable that a farmer should have the same rate of wages?—That is a difficult question to answer.

55. Do you see any reason why he should not have the same rate of pay?—There is a difference in this respect: that the farmer in many cases is working for himself, and he pleases himself whether he wishes to work overtime or not, but he is not working for a private employer the same as the waterside worker would be.

56. Is there any reason why the farmer with the practical knowledge—and you will admit he has more knowledge than the waterside worker—should work on Sundays and holidays at lesser rates of pay?—No, he should not.

57. *The Chairman.*] The return from Mr. Singleton shows that in 1914 the farmer's average wage was 8d. per hour, and in 1920 it is 1s.: do you think that is a reasonable wage for a farmer to earn?—No, I should think it is a very small wage.

58. You say emphatically that you think the farmer should receive the world's market price for his butter?—I have already stated that, I think.

59. One witness said that the farmers were patriotic enough to sell their butter at a low price irrespective of the world's market price: what do you say about that?—I do not think he is.

60. You think he is entitled to the world's price?—Yes, certainly. While you maintain the present system of production for profit a man is entitled to get all he can out of it.

61. Well, taking your own farm to-day at the price that you say you could sell it at, if you were to take the full value of that farm and invest it at 6 per cent. and then take a job working as a labourer, if you like, would you be better off than working on the farm?—I might be making more money, but I do not know that I would enjoy life any better.

62. Do you think you would be better off? Supposing your farm is worth £5,000 or £6,000, at 6 per cent. that would give you a decent income for a start. Would you be better off with wages at the present price?—I am not inclined to take that on myself.

63. You are not working the farm?—My present life suits me better.

64. But if you were working there, do you think you would be better off if you invested your money and went out to work at present prices?—No, I have not thought that way or I should have done it, and I have had any amount of temptations to do that sort of thing.

65. Supposing you sold your farm at to-day's price, and seeing you agreed in answer to a question from one of the members of the Committee that the price of the produce would regulate the price of the land and bring the value back, if you sold on to-day's prices it would necessarily follow, if butter fell next year, that the man you sold to could not make ends meet?—Yes, that is so.

PETER HANSEN examined. (No. 17.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You are a farmer residing at Awahuri?—Yes.

2. In response to a request from the Agricultural Department you prepared a statement of receipts and expenditure in connection with your farm of 62 acres?—Yes.

3. I understand you took the Government valuation of £100 as the value of your farm per acre?—Yes. One of the sections I bought ten years ago. I have two sections totalling 62 acres—one 37½ acres, one 24½ acres. Since I sent the first return in I have made out another balance-sheet, but the one I sent in first I made out on the Government valuation.