

in, he says to himself "These ships will be in in a day or two, and I will place what I have got." He does so and puts down the price, knowing that he can buy forty or fifty thousand of the expected shipments cheaper. A salesman could do that very well.

18. Perhaps you remember one salesman who put the market down for six weeks in that way?—I do.

19. Who are your agents at Home now?—Blankley and Parsons.

20. Have they stores?—Yes, they have six or seven stores.

21. With regard to the concentration of the meat in single hands: would you be in favour of legislation requiring that all the meat should go through one centre? You are of opinion that the ideal system would be to concentrate the meat through a board in London?—Certainly.

22. Do you think there is any hope of that being brought about if you leave the matter to the individual people concerned?—Not the slightest.

23. In order to make the ideal system certain, would you be in favour of the Government requiring that all the meat should go through that centre?—I think the less the Government have to do with it the better. The people concerned ought to do it, but I do not think they will. It ought to go through a board.

24. But you do not think the people will ever unite to send it through a board?—I think a board is necessary, but that it is hopeless to get a board to do it. There is the matter of freights and insurance to be considered, and if there was one control over everything there would be a very great difference.

25. Is it within your experience that one representative acting for New Zealand has, in spite of the union of all the others, broken down the market for weeks?—Yes; I have heard of that.

26. *Mr. McLachlan.*] If we can establish the fact that the South Island sheep are better than the North Island sheep it will satisfy all the grumbling of the North Island men. Are you satisfied that the South Island sheep are better than the North Island sheep?—I am. I like your North Island beef, but not your mutton.

27. And that applies to the whole of the Middle Island?—Yes.

28. The South Island sheep mature better?—Yes.

29. *Mr. Haselden.*] Do you remember Mr. Nathan's scheme of a few years ago for concentrating the whole of the frozen-meat trade?—No. If he had been a meat-expert I would. There are so many people who have schemes.

30. That seems to be the trouble—the want of concentration in the Home market?—Yes. We commenced wrongly.

31. You do not see any way out of it at present except by Government assistance?—I do not see how you can get out of it.

32. Do you buy North Island sheep for freezing to send Home?—Yes.

33. Do you send them to Canterbury first?—We put them through the Meat-export Company, and have our brand underneath theirs.

34. Do you freeze in Canterbury?—We freeze where we buy, either in Wellington or Hawke's Bay. We do not put our brand on your sheep at all—that is, our registered brand. We dare not.

35. Some of your sheep go down to Canterbury?—Some do, but not to freeze.

36. Do you think if we sent our sheep to Canterbury they would become as good as Canterbury sheep?—You would never alter the meat.

37. As a rule our sheep are heavier weights?—Yes.

38. Would not that make a difference in the price?—It would make them less in value.

39. But if they are larger sheep would that not make a difference in the price?—There are other expenses, such as freight.

40. The buyers here select the biggest sheep they can get?—I do not do so.

41. *Mr. Field.*] You have stated that for freezing purposes the South Island sheep are better than the North Island sheep?—Yes.

42. You estimate the difference at half-a-crown a sheep?—Yes. There is also a difference in the value of the wool.

43. And the difference would be accentuated later in the season when the sheep began to grow?—Yes.

44. I understood you to say that you bought several classes of sheep in the North Island—good sheep and bad sheep?—No. I buy different classes, but not bad sheep. I have got a good few thousands of fine-wools here.

45. In both the Wairarapa and Hawke's Bay districts do you find that there are two different values of sheep? Do you find some sheep superior to others?—You find that everywhere—even within a radius of ten miles.

46. Do you find several shillings' worth of difference?—No, not several shillings. It is the difference in feeding, wool, and quality.

47. What would be the difference in value between the better class of North Island sheep and those not of the better class?—I think I have already told you that the difference is half-a-crown in the fine-woolled sheep of the North Island.

48. You can buy here sheep of different values?—Yes, and they go from half-a-crown upwards.

49. Yes, but take two fat sheep in the North Island, one may be worth a good deal more than another?—Yes.

50. Can you give us an idea of the difference?—No; I could not give an opinion without seeing the sheep.

51. Why I ask the question is this: It has been stated before this Committee that the people here have to sell their sheep at one price to the local buyers, and that is complained of?—Yes.

52. I want to get from you an idea as to the difference in value?—If they take the good with the bad it is—