

57. As a representative of farmers you would not object to a reduction in the weight, provided that the bag was not reduced in size?—We should not have such a great objection, but we should still have an objection to that, on account of the extra trouble in sewing.

58. Men are not so strong as they used to be?—Well, I know I am not.

59. We have a right to think of other workers?—Undoubtedly.

60. And if there has been a reasonable outcry, the farmers would not object?—I do not know what the individual farmers would do. I can only speak of the resolutions that have been passed by my association, and from my own personal knowledge. Some individual farmers might object most strongly.

61. *Mr. Bollard.*] Do you think that 200 lb. in weight of anything the farmer produces is quite enough to put in any bag?—It is a fair weight, I admit that.

62. Do you think it would be better for all parties—for the men who are handling bags day after day and year after year—that they should not be asked to deal with more than 200 lb. in any sized sack?—Of course, I could hardly say. I know that if a man is in the habit of handling weights he becomes accustomed to it, and can do it with much greater ease and alacrity than a man who goes at it green. Perhaps a 200 lb. sack would be a very heavy weight to me, who has not been accustomed to lifting for some years, and yet another man, who has been in the habit of lifting, would lift a much greater weight—say, 260 lb.

63. Supposing the men at the stores had a thousand sacks to deal with, they would deal quicker with a thousand sacks of 200 lb. weight than 1,000 sacks of 240 lb. There would be less strain upon them?—I should think there would.

64. Do you not think that if they were dealing with 200 lb. sacks they would handle the same weight of grain of any sort in a quicker time than if the sacks were 240 lb. ones?—I should not like to say they would handle it in quicker time, because they would have an extra bag in every five or six, would they not? It would be hardly reasonable to say they would handle it in quicker time.

65. Supposing two men had to put 2 tons of wheat upon a dray, do you think they would put it on quicker with 100 lb. bags than 240 lb. bags?—I do not think they would.

66. My experience is to the contrary?—One man would do it quicker, certainly, but if you put two they would not.

67. *Mr. Atken.*] Do any farmers in your association keep their men employed at lifting sacks of grain, day in and day out, for a week or a month at a time?—Not down our way.

68. That being the case, the view that we wish you to take cannot possibly present itself to you in a practical way, can it? There are at the ports men who are employed day in and day out for weeks on end?—Yes.

69. Would you like to see men in your employ carrying sacks holding 240 lb. of grain all day long for weeks at a time?—No, I should not like to see any man do it. Is it done? Do they handle these sacks for weeks at a time?

70. It is represented to us that that is the case at ports where grain is handled—that they get the men to handle grain in that way for weeks at a time. Granting that that is the case, would it modify your association's opinion as to the size of sacks?—I cannot speak as to that.

71. Give us your own opinion?—My own opinion is that we would rather sacrifice the weight.

72. And take the smaller sacks?—No.

73. You would rather sew down the bag?—Yes.

74. *Mr. Hogg.*] I presume that the main consideration with you is the saving of time and money?—Yes, it is.

75. You consider that by handling good-sized bags labour is economized with regard to sewing, and in various ways?—Yes.

76. Do you find that amongst the workmen employed there are great variations in the physical strength of the individuals?—Very much so.

77. What do you think is a fair burden for the average worker to be carrying for hours together?—I really could not say. I have had no experience of that. Our experience is in lifting sacks on to drays, or in stacking a barn.

78. Have you found any difficulty at any time in getting men able to carry those weights?—No. The men who work our teams make no trouble about it.

79. They are accustomed to the work?—They may grumble a little about it the first day, but after they get a bit seasoned at it those who are at big places say that it makes no difference to them. They would just as soon handle a bag of wheat as a bag of oats. I am speaking now of loading drays and stacking in barns.

80. Do you know of any cases where permanent injury has arisen from the carrying of those sacks?—No.

81. You have heard no complaints of the kind?—No.

82. *Mr. Barber.*] Supposing you did take a small-sized sack for wheat, the returned sacks would come into use afterwards for many articles, such as potatoes or turnips, or anything like that—that sack would still be available as a second-hand sack?—It might be available, but it would make an alteration in the present custom of giving, say, twelve bags of potatoes to the ton. It would then really mean thirteen.

83. That would only alter the present custom a little bit?—Yes.

84. Do you think there would be very much loss in handling all the heavy articles in smaller-sized sacks?—No, perhaps there would not be so much loss in handling the whole of the heavy products, but there would be a loss in handling the lighter products.

85. But, supposing you confined the use of the small sacks to heavy products?—Then it would mean that the farmer would have to keep two sizes of sacks.

86. Supposing you adopted one size of sack for heavy articles, and a larger-sized sack for light commodities such as chaff, instead of using the returned grain-sacks for chaff, there would be a gain on that side?—There would be a loss, because we should have to keep two sizes of sack.