Very often we have found that one could sweep up bags of grain from the hold—grain that has been lost. That must be a loss to the farmer in the first place, if his bags get torn. It does not matter how strong the bags are, when you have to tumble them about you cannot help knocking them about. You have not always got the time to see how you put your hook in, and you turn the bag over, and the first thing you know, perhaps, is that you yourself are capsized through the bag carrying away. In loading, when we do have a stack, perhaps we may build up so high that we have to carry the grain while almost on our knees. Then we have to fill in between the beams. That also gives a lot of heavy dragging and pulling. We contend that the 200 lb. bag is really the handiest bag for us. A smaller bag, of 100 lb., we do not care about, because we imagine that that would probably make heavier work in some cases, in this way: Where now, with the 200 lb. bag one man could take that on his back and take it away, with a 100 lb. bag one man would be expected to pick that bag up and throw it anywhere In that case it would make the work even heavier on us than with the 200 lb. bag. Then, we contend that to shorten the present bag—that is, the 4-bushel bag—would be altogether out of place, because, as has already been stated, when you were carrying from a stack it would be a much harder bag to take on your back. The bag does not balance, you have to lift it on to your back. Then, again, the bag would not stack so well. So we support the bag being made narrower. If it is made shorter, make it narrower in proportion.

4. *Mr. Laurenson.*] How many men are there working on the wharves in Dunedin?—I could hardly say. There would be, perhaps, about three hundred.

5. Do you know of any cases where men have been disabled or injured through straining?—Not since I have been on the wharves. In Dunedin we do not get such a terrible lot of bagging as at Lyttelton or some other ports.

6. Do you believe that a result of the use of the smaller sack would be that you would be able to do your work quicker?—Much easier and quicker, certainly. In stowing, if you get a light bag you have to get it up and then push it in. Of course, we do not get men in the hold to stow our bags for us; we have to stow them ourselves. Sometimes we have to crawl in on our hands and knees.

THURSDAY, 12TH SEPTEMBER, 1907.

Mr. G. W. LEADLEY examined. (No. 5.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Your name is ——?—George William Leadley. I am vice-president of the New Zealand Farmers' Union.

2. And you are a farmer?—Yes.

3. Would you kindly give the Committee a statement of your views?—Yes. I am sent here, at the invitation of your Committee, by the executive of the North Canterbury Section of the Farmers' Union to state our views on the size of grain-sacks. It is really the weight of the contents of the sacks that is the point at issue. We fear that the reduction of the size of the sack would occasion considerable annoyance and difficulty. If the contents of the sack are to be reduced, we should prefer that 210 lb., and not 200 lb., should be the weight of the wheat-sack.

4. Is that 210 lb. in an ordinary sack—48 in. by 26½ in.?—Yes. The reason we ask for bags of 210 lb. is because of the ease of calculating the contents and the facilities for stacking these bags in large quantities. In most of the stores now where wheat is handled, it is carried on the one floor, and very large stacks—from thirty to forty bags high—are built up. A shorter sack, with the same breadth, however, would be really dangerous to stack, and the stack would have to be wired round. But the few additional pounds would to some extent get over this difficulty. If, on the other hand, the bag is reduced to 200 lb., and a smaller sack made to contain only that quantity, such a sack will be perfectly useless for many purposes. It will be useless to the miller for holding bran and chaff; of very little use for oats, or the lighter grain or grass-seed; and we believe that if a 200 lb. bag—to contain that quantity, and that quantity only—be adopted, the farmers will have to sell their wheat, sacks in. I may add that we do not apply the same amount of manual labour to sack-lifting that we did in years past. I have here an illustration showing the loading of grain by means of traction-engines, and where the haulage is done by the ordinary farm team we use a tripod with block and tackle. Really, on the farms there is very little lifting of bags at all now, and in the stores there is scarcely any cause for lifting, as the bags are hauled up by horse-power.

5. *Mr. Flatman.*] You say, Mr. Leadley, that if the weight which you suggest is not put into the sacks, it may be necessary for the farmers to buy new sacks for chaff, &c.?—Yes.

6. *Mr. Bollard.*] Have you had any experience in handling 100 lb. sacks?—No; but I had a lot of 80 lb. sacks.

7. Are you aware that in the United States and in Canada 100 lb. sacks are generally used for grain?—I have been informed so.

8. Supposing we had 100 lb. sacks here—would they be convenient for counting?—In Canada you could not attach the ordinary 4-bushel sacks on the Yankee machine.

9. Do you not think it would be a progressive step if we had 100 lb. bags in general use?—In some respects it would facilitate work if the cental system were in vogue, but it would be utterly useless in many other respects.

10. Supposing I had 500 tons to place on board a train, or to move into store, in 100 lb. bags and you had a like quantity of sacks as used now, do you think it would take more time to deal with my 500 tons than yours?—I think it would.

11. You think the 100 lb. bags would not be handled much quicker?—The individual bags would be, but not the total quantity. I have handled 80 lb. bags for sending to South Africa, but we could not stack them to any height with any degree of safety; the stacks had to be kept together with wire. My men could load a truck of seventy or eighty ordinary bags of wheat