

*Remarks on the Above List.*—I say that Fitzsimmons's affection was "partly from the effects of drink," because, after carrying grain all day, he would imbibe more than he required, yet keep on with his work the next day. The case of W. Reeder is very pitiable, as the following account by his widow will show: While carrying a bag of wheat down a ship's hold he felt his neck rick, and called out to his mates that he had hurt his back; and he never carried another sack. Seeing the doctor shortly afterwards, the latter told him that he had strained his spinal column and also his optic nerves. In a few weeks he went blind of both eyes. A concert (realising £50) was got up with the object of sending him to Australia to enable him to try to recover his eyesight; but he was unsuccessful, and died afterwards from the effects of the injury to the spinal column. D. Kelly died of aneurism of the heart in 1901. He went into the Christchurch Hospital as Thomas Hunter came out of it. Both were suffering from similar injuries, and the doctors patched them up as best they could. When the men were able to go about the Christchurch Medical Association called on them to be examined. Twelve doctors were present, and both men stripped to the waist, and were examined separately by each doctor. After going through two or three evolutions of the body Hunter inquired if it would be safe for him to continue carrying a little, and was informed that it would mean committing suicide. Kelly told the association that if his heart would serve as evidence in the cause of reducing the weight of grain-sacks they could take it from his body when he was dead. The heart is now in the hands of Dr. Orchard, and if your Committee wish it to be sent to Wellington for inspection it shall be sent. Two men asked the doctors of Christchurch to assist them in getting the weight of sacks reduced. As a result of that deputation to the Christchurch Medical Association the latter wrote a letter to the Chamber of Commerce, on the 21st August, 1899, a copy of which I hand in [Exhibit A]. I also hand in a copy of a letter which the Chamber of Commerce addressed to the Right Hon. the Premier on the subject, [Exhibit B], and a copy of a leading article which appeared in the *Lyttelton Times* of the 21st August, 1899 [Exhibit C].

2. *Mr. Hardy.*] Have you carried many sacks?—Yes.

3. Have you carried many of those short sacks about which you are giving evidence?—Yes, but not many.

4. What is your experience of the injuries likely to result from handling the sacks which are now in use?—It will bring on strained heart and mental affections.

5. Are you a medical man?—No; I have not passed as such. But passed first-aid in ambulance.

6. You say that these sacks have not been in general use?—No.

7. Then, you are only assuming that the lifting of them would bring on strained heart?—I have a list with me of injured men alive in Lyttelton.

8. You say these sacks are not generally in use?—They are not in use now.

9. Consequently no trouble has ensued through the handling of sacks which have really not been used; it is only the danger of their being used that you object to?—The men believe that if they were still to keep carrying those sacks in time it would affect some part of their head.

10. Then you are of opinion that if these sacks were put into use danger would ensue?—Yes.

11. Nothing has happened up to the present?—I could not say.

12. You have said that the sacks are not generally in use?—Yes; but the men now in Lyttelton may be suffering from the effects of handling the short sacks, which were in use two or three years ago.

13. Then you practically hold that 240 lb. is too much for a man to handle in a ship's hold?—Yes, it is too much.

14. Are you of opinion, then, that the farmers should be limited to 200 lb. sacks?—Yes.

15. You would not like to injure the farmer, would you, by putting an additional expense on him: if it were shown in evidence that the farmer was going to lose considerably over the sacks you would not like to press that matter very much?—I do not think they would be losing very much; they could carry the offal at a reduced rate; they could reduce the weight of bran in a bag.

16. But what about potatoes?—I know that some eight or nine years ago some sacks of English grass-seed came out here, and, as the bags contained 2 cwt. 3 qr. 5 lb., the men refused to carry them, and the seed had to be rebagged.

17. But you would not injure a fine industry like the farming industry by insisting that the bags should be reduced in size, when the farmers are prepared to meet you in reducing the quantity you would have to carry?—The men themselves do not object to the narrow bag—they wish to have a narrow bag—and they think it would not hurt the farmers.

18. Yes, but they are not farmers. But to go half-way to meet them, by reducing the weight to 200 lb., or even less?—They would sooner go back to the old sack than have to carry 200 lb. in the present sack.

19. You say you have carried wheat: have you sustained any injury?—Yes, a rupture, owing to carrying a 240 lb. bag of peas up a ladder. When they reduced the size of grain-sacks last year the wheat-sacks were the only ones reduced; the peas and bean sacks kept the same.

20. I suppose now you are not able to carry?—No.

21. Have you known of many men being injured?—I have, and also heard of them.

22. And do you know of any men who have died from it?—Yes; the men referred to in the list of men injured or killed.

23. Is that the only man you have known recently: that is not going very far back?—The most serious case is that about which the Medical Association at Christchurch wrote to the Chamber of Commerce. I will hand in a copy of their letter.

24. *Mr. Laurensen.*] The question is, could they shift a lot of grain-sacks quicker in lighter than heavier sacks?—An ordinary gang of men at the Railway sheds at Lyttelton consists of six