

50. A means of advertising his business?—It is a necessary adjunct to the business, in order to keep your clients together.

51. But a grain-merchant really makes a little profit out of his grain sometimes?—I hope so.

52. The grain and the sacks together make it a reasonably profitable business if you have good luck?—Yes; it is a very speculative business, you know.

53. Do you know anything about the losses the farmer might suffer through using different sizes of sacks?—You mean if they went in for the 100 lb. bags? They do not at present use different-sized sacks. They are practically all using 48's.

54. A short time ago they were using 46's and 44's?—Yes.

55. Did you hear any complaint?—Yes, a good many grumbled.

56. Would there be any loss, do you think, if the sacks were still made 48 in. and turned down at the ends?—I do not know whether there would be any actual loss. It makes a very cumbersome kind of package for stowing in the ship's hold. Probably it would cost more in freight.

57. You would not like to inconvenience the farmers, if you thought the introduction of a smaller bag was going to inconvenience them considerably?—Not for a moment.

58. Do you know that threshing-machines and chaff-cutters are at present fitted up for these large bags?—Yes.

59. Would it necessitate the alteration of these?—It must, if you have a smaller-sized bag; but not for the 44's.

60. Are the same kind of sacks used for potatoes?—Yes.

61. Are they used for anything else—carrots?—For everything connected with farming—oats, barley, potatoes, swedes—anything you like.

62. You have often been on farms?—Yes.

63. You have seen a great number of sacks hanging about all over the place?—Yes.

64. Then, if we had to get another size of sack, the loss or inconvenience might be greater?—There would be a loss to somebody.

65. Do the farmers of Canterbury approve of the reduction in the size of the sack?—Well, as you know from the reports of the Farmers' Union, there is a divided opinion on the matter. I do not know how the majority would go if they were all got together. At our last annual meeting a well-known man, Mr. Horrell, advocated the 48 in. sack, and Mr. O'Halloran, who is also a very well-known man in Canterbury, went exactly on the opposite tack.

66. He does not handle grain, though?—That might be, but he went on the exactly opposite tack.

67. Are you of opinion that the man who is a large wool-grower would be more interested in the size of the woolpacks than in the size of corn-sacks?—Yes, he necessarily would.

68. Do you know what Mr. Horrell is?—Yes.

69. Does he grow grain?—Yes; he is a sheep-farmer, too.

70. He does more grain-growing?—I dare say he does. I am not quite sure. He deals a lot in sheep, too.

71. Mr. O'Halloran deals in wool?—Yes.

72. At any rate, you would favour a reduction in the weight of the wheat carried in the sacks?—I feel that that is the general public desire—that the sack should be 200 lb. Though not absolutely sure about the necessity, I can see its desirability under the present condition of things.

73. And, even though the sack itself were not reduced in size, you would approve of the quantity of wheat that is put into the sack being reduced?—I approve of that under the present conditions, yes.

74. *Mr. Aitken.*] Speaking about the size of the sacks and the looms in Calcutta for producing these sacks: it is only in the length that the loom can be changed, not in the width, is it?—That is so.

75. The width must be the same?—Well, the width is the same.

76. It must be?—Is that so?

77. *The Chairman.*] Are you in a position to say whether they can or cannot make a narrower width in India?—You could with special looms.

78. Are you yourself in a position to say they cannot make a narrower-sized sack?—No. I should say you could make a special loom to make a special size. I believe that to be the case.

79. You believe that if you want a narrower sack you can get it made?—Yes, I believe so.

80. You do not weigh in sacks at all in buying from the farmer, do you?—No; practically speaking, they are always paid for.

81. Have you any idea what proportion of sacks are re-used in this colony—what proportion of the total number that are used are again sold out to the farmers second-hand: 10 per cent.?—I cannot tell you that.

82. You could not say whether 10 per cent. of the total number of sacks used in a season are re-used?—It would be mere guesswork.

83. Would the larger sack—the 48 in.—turned down, stack?—It would be, I should say, if anything, a little more awkward than the 44 in.

84. Does the London market at the present time control the price here for wheat—the price that is paid to the farmer?—In a sense it does, because, in the first place, it affects Australia, and we in turn are affected as the price goes up there.

85. Could you pay the present current rates and ship the grain to London?—No; we are above the relative London rates.

86. So that at present London is not fixing the price?—Except in an indirect fashion, *via* Australia.

87. *Mr. Flatman.*] I understand you to say that if the sacks were narrower they would be awkward to the farmers for the threshing-mill?—They would have to alter the threshing-mills to suit them.