

and I say that there are some things in respect to which we must look to the Government for; but I shall not take up more time now—I shall take another opportunity to deal with that later on.

*Mr. J. D. Hall* (Canterbury Agricultural and Pastoral Association).—I second that, Mr. Chairman. It falls to me to second that amendment, seeing that I am the other member of the minority committee. I never felt greater regret than when I sat to deliberate with that committee last night, when I had beside me men with much riper experience than mine, and whose opinion I valued, and yet I could not agree with them. I really think it is more due to a misunderstanding than anything else that the report came down in the form it took in regard to this particular paragraph. The point to which we took exception is the statement in clause 1 that the committee considers the present facilities are sufficient for disposing of the frozen meat. It all depends on what you call "facilities." I do not think there is anybody in this room (except that fearless gentleman, Mr. Turnbull, perhaps) who will attempt to show that the insurances and the methods of adjusting claims, &c., are satisfactory. I cannot subscribe to that part of the report; and it has necessitated the desirability of bringing down something further, and that is what Mr. Lysnar drew up last night, and which I now beg to second. You have heard the statements that have been made by the Hon. the Minister with regard to what took place within his knowledge. You have heard the statements with regard to the damages supposed to occur, and unless I am perfectly well satisfied that those statements are incorrect, and that the damage is incorrect, and that we have not to pay higher rates this year in consequence, I cannot say that the present facilities are sufficient. If they are not sufficient, I think it is part of the duty of the associations and unions representing farmers, great and small, to do all they possibly can to see that they are rectified and remedied. In regard to section (a)—that we consider the reform can be best brought about by arranging with an institution carrying on its business on co-operative lines, whose interests cannot come in conflict with those of the producers, for the sale of the produce in England on a more equitable basis than at present: We did not contemplate that we should inaugurate another institution, and go out to seek capital. We quite recognize that in that we should have a very uphill game to fight, and it would be doubtful if we could accomplish our object. But we did think it desirable that information should go forth to the farmers who have lambs to sell that this, in the opinion of this representative meeting of farmers and business men, is the method by which they will obtain fair prices for their produce; that it will be sold under conditions in London which are as little defective as possible; and that is what they may fairly and reasonably ask to know. If it happens that this report of ours is misunderstood to the extent of thinking that we are going to set up an institution, or depot, or office to control the prices or regulate the trade, I should like to say straightaway that you are absolutely mistaken; and I think Mr. Lysnar will bear me out in that. There is one point about the matter, too, and that is this: When it was first suggested that this Conference should be convened, it was some time before November, and the president of my association did not think it desirable that the meeting should be convened hastily, that the matter should be considered hastily by the Canterbury Association, and we had to wait for a month for our Show to be over; then we had to give ample time for you to consider whether it was desirable you should be represented, and now we have come towards the end of January, and the season is far advanced; and if we are to wait the result of the deliberations of the freezing companies, which I understand will take place, further time must elapse, and the season will be still further advanced. I think that if a committee could be set up (I do not mind how it is set up) to go into this question, and let the farmers know what are the best lines on which the farmers can conduct the sales of produce, it would be an excellent idea. If it is thought that there is any suggestion that we should interfere with the local buyers, that is not my opinion. The more we see of them, the more we like them; we welcome them every time; we will give them all they want—except our lambs at a reduction.

*A Voice*.—Do not interfere with us when we want to organize for our own protection.

*Mr. Hall*.—Well, the farmers have not had a very rosy time lately. A million of money from this country means a shortage somewhere. We are already thinking what we shall have to lend money at in March. We shall really have to raise the rates. Take a farmer with a little block of land, who is liable to have his income reduced by a drop of 30 per cent. I have to move in connection with insurance matters later on, and it would be absolutely inconsistent that I should concur in the report of the committee saying that facilities are sufficient, when I am going to move later on that they are not.

*Mr. Borthwick*.—In reply to Mr. Lysnar, sir, I think it is only fair that I should say why it is we cannot all make such good profits as the Gisborne Farmers' Company. I have had experience of putting bullocks through those works with 20 lb. of fat, and through our own at 65 lb. fat. Wool is also sometimes kept by that company, and they state openly that they do it, and therefore do it honestly, but it is a source of profit to them to no inappreciable extent in the course of the year. And so with other matters.

*Mr. A. L. Joseph* (Christchurch).—I have great pleasure in supporting what Mr. Borthwick suggests. I am a farmer and a freezer, and I have frozen with the Gisborne Farmers' Company, and I know they are not a liberal people to the farmers at all. They keep their pelts, and out of that they have made £10,000 or £12,000—made at the expense of the farmers; and as far as their freezing is concerned, it is not equal to that of any other good company in New Zealand.

*Mr. W. Murray* (Christchurch Meat Company).—Mr. Lysnar has made some sweeping charges relative to the amount of damage on carcasses of frozen meat. He made it clear that these statements also applied to the Canterbury meat. Sir George Clifford very properly took objection to the manner in which Mr. Lysnar brought forward those remarks. Now, we have heard a great deal about damage, and I do not for a moment wish to say that insurance matters are quite on the lines we should like to see them, and we hope in time to have them better; but in view of the sweeping charges as to 10, and 12, and 15 per cent. damage on carcasses, I can only inform you