

They threw the paunches away?—Yes. I do not know whether they do it all the time, but they were doing it then.

Is that still going on down there?—I could not say.

When did this occur?—About a year ago.

*Mr. Hawken*: From the experiences of the various countries where the trust has been operating, do you not think it would be better to stick to our own present methods rather than run the risk of allowing the trust to dominate this country?—I have never known the trust to operate unfairly in America. From my experience of America there seemed to be any amount of competition. You would be surprised at the amount of competition there is there. Besides the large firms there is a large number of small speculators buying the farmers' produce.

*Mr. J. R. Hamilton*: You have had experience of the buyers from Armour and Co. in connection with the commandeer here. You know that the buyers would come round and give exactly the same price as the commandeer. You know it has been the general opinion that these people were allowed to despatch a certain amount to their firm in London?—I could not say. I do not know.

Your experience was that they would give you the same price as the commandeer?—Yes.

They gave you exactly the same price?—Yes.

Was it not the general opinion that they were able to sell a certain amount at the other end, and that the more they got at this end the larger would be the proportion they would be able to deal with at the other end?—That may be so; I could not say.

You believe there are a fair number of combines in New Zealand already, and that some people are looking to the American market for competition?—Yes, I believe that is so.

You think that with our present legislation, should there be any trouble, we could stop them at any time?—Yes, they can be controlled by the Government.

*Mr. Lysnar*: How many sheep do you put out?—I run about a couple of thousand sheep.

You run that number?—Yes.

But how many do you put out?—About a thousand lambs easily, and then about three hundred wethers, and then there are dry ewes.

With regard to the district you mentioned in America where you carried on farming operations, was not that a cotton district?—It was mostly cattle, but before I left it was going rapidly into cotton.

It was going rapidly into cotton?—Yes, rapidly.

That was because cotton paid better than cattle?—You could not put a cattle-man into the cotton business.

Well, anyhow, the land went into cotton?—Yes. The land in the north-west of Texas was like a draught-board. The Government owned a very large number of the sections, and the railway also owned a very large number. The land was practically held between the railway and the Government. When I went there first you could get free grants of land, but when the railway went through settlement came along, and of course the cattle-men had to go.

It was in 1908 that you left America?—Yes.

You are aware that just before that the Meat Trust had come into active operation?—There was a Commission of inquiry in connection with the trusts in 1904, just after the South African War.

But you are aware that the main start of the trouble came after 1908—really in 1911?—No, I do not know.

You do not know that there was a drop in stock in America?—No.

You are not aware that there was a drop in stock in America?—I know that they had a bad drought for three years in Texas.

Are you not aware that the chief trouble with the trusts has been since the period you have mentioned?—I do not know.

You are asking the Committee to take action upon what occurred before 1908?—I am just giving my experiences.

Before 1908?—Yes.

And you do not know what has taken place since?—Excepting what I have read in the papers.

With regard to the £26 13s. 4d. per head which you state was paid for steers in America, that would include all the offal and everything?—Yes, everything.

And the £9 10s. you spoke of at Edendale, that would not include the head?—It included everything.

Are you not aware what the freezing-works do in regard to the offal?—That was in 1908.

Were those prices paid in the saleyard?—They were paid for cattle in the paddock.

You are aware that, in consequence of an agitation among the farmers all over the Dominion, the Government has passed legislation to protect the farmers from these combines. Do you not think it would be best to take advantage of that legislation and not allow Armour and Co to come to New Zealand? Would it not be better to put our own house in order rather than admit Armour and Co. from America?—No, not at the present time.

Not at the present time?—Well, not at any time. You are only speaking theoretically.

You know that the legislation is here, and that the Government has refused to grant Armour and Co. a license?—I believe that Armour and Co. ought to be granted a license. I believe it would be best to grant them a license.

Would it not be best to put our own house in order; you say that we want a better system here?—I say that what you want is a better system of marketing your produce all over the world.

Do you not think it would be best for the farmers to take advantage of the legislation the Government has passed in their interests?—If you have special legislation you can prevent Armour and Co. from acting detrimentally towards the producers.

We cannot exercise control outside of New Zealand, but we can exercise control in New Zealand. Are you not aware that Armour and Co. have a number of retail shops in England?—I think they appoint agents. It is the agents who run the retail shops.

You are urging that Armour and Co. should be allowed to come into New Zealand?—I believe they should be allowed to come in because then there would be more buyers than under the present system.