

1905.  
NEW ZEALAND.

JOINT AGRICULTURAL, PASTORAL, AND STOCK  
COMMITTEE :

REPORT ON THE SLAUGHTERING AND INSPECTION AMENDMENT BILL; TOGETHER  
WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

(HON. J. D. ORMOND, CHAIRMAN.)

*Report brought up on Friday, the 29th September, 1905, and ordered to be printed.*

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

*Extracts from the Journals of the Legislative Council.*

THURSDAY, THE 29TH DAY OF JUNE, 1905.

*Ordered*, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider all matters pertaining to agricultural and pastoral industries and stock, with power to sit and confer with any similar Committee of the House of Representatives, and to agree to a separate or joint Report; with power to call for persons, papers, and records: the Committee to consist of the Hon. Mr. Baldey, the Hon. Mr. Bowen, the Hon. Major Harris, the Hon. Mr. T. Kelly, the Hon. Mr. W. Kelly, the Hon. Mr. McLean, the Hon. Mr. Ormond, the Hon. Mr. Walker, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. PITT.)

FRIDAY, THE 7TH DAY OF JULY, 1905.

*Ordered*, "That the Hon. Mr. Arkwright be appointed a member of the Agricultural, Pastoral, and Stock Committee, in lieu of the Hon. Mr. Bowen."—(Hon. Mr. PITT.)

*Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.*

WEDNESDAY, THE 28TH DAY OF JUNE, 1905.

*Ordered*, "That Standing Order No. 218 be suspended, and that a Committee, consisting of fourteen members, be appointed to consider all matters pertaining to agricultural and pastoral industries and stock, with power to confer and sit together with any similar Committee which may be appointed by the Legislative Council, and to agree to a joint or separate Report; the Committee to have power to call for persons, papers, and records, three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Bollard, Mr. Buddo, Mr. Hogg, Mr. Kidd, Mr. Kirkbride, Mr. Lawry, Mr. Lethbridge, Mr. T. Mackenzie, Mr. McLachlan, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Rutherford, Hon. Sir W. J. Stewart, Mr. Symes, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. DUNCAN.)

TUESDAY, THE 25TH DAY OF JULY, 1905.

*Ordered*, "That the Slaughtering and Inspection Amendment Bill be referred to the Joint Agricultural, Pastoral, and Stock Committee."—(Hon. Mr. DUNCAN.)

REPORT.

THE Joint Agricultural, Pastoral, and Stock Committee, to whom was referred the Slaughtering and Inspection Amendment Bill, have the honour to report that they have considered the said Bill, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed with the amendments shown on a copy of the Bill attached hereto.

J. D. ORMOND, Chairman.

29th September, 1905.

## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

TUESDAY, 22ND AUGUST, 1905.

Mr. ARTHUR GADSBY, Butcher, examined. (No. 1.)

1. *Hon. the Chairman.*] You wish to give evidence upon this Slaughtering and Inspection Amendment Bill?—Yes, sir.

2. Your name is?—Arthur Gadsby.

3. And your occupation?—Butcher, at the Hutt.

4. You have seen the Bill?—Yes, sir.

5. Will you now refer to the different points in the Bill to which you wish to call the attention of the Committee?—The particular point to which I would like to call attention is the clause in the Bill which permits any local authority to delegate its powers to any person or company.

6. *Hon. Mr. Pitt.*] Which clause is that?—Clause 7. In the case of Wellington, I object to the delegation of these powers by the Municipal Corporation to either of the large companies.

7. What powers do you refer to?—Killing-powers and selling-powers.

8. *Mr. Hogg.*] You do not want the large meat-export companies to have control of the sale of the meat?—That is so.

9. You object to their taking any powers under this Bill as to slaughtering meat for sale?—Not exactly. I object to the Municipal Corporation being allowed under this Bill to delegate their powers with regard to abattoirs to either of the large companies. If we are going to have inspection we should have public municipal abattoirs. Section 15 of the principal Act—the Act of 1900—says (paragraph 1): “In lieu of itself establishing an abattoir, the local authority or authorities, with the exception of the local authorities respectively of the Cities of Wellington, Dunedin, Christchurch, Auckland, and the Borough of Invercargill, and any local authorities within a radius of eight miles of the aforesaid cities and borough, may delegate to any fit person or persons the power to establish the same, upon such terms and conditions as, with the previous approval of the Minister, are agreed on.” Clause 7 of this Bill says, “Section fifteen of the principal Act is hereby amended by repealing paragraph one and substituting in lieu thereof the following: ‘(1.) In lieu of itself establishing an abattoir a local authority may, with the consent of the Minister, delegate to any fit person or persons the power to establish the same upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed on.’” I object to the Municipal Corporation in the City of Wellington being allowed to delegate their powers to either of the large companies. I consider, if this power was delegated to either of the large companies, that the small butcher would not be treated on the same basis as if we had our own public abattoirs. We should not, for instance, get the whole of our offal, which is a very important thing to the small butcher. If there is to be any change from the present system of carrying on butchering business let us have public abattoirs, so that we are all placed on the same footing. Personally speaking, I am doing about twenty-five bullocks a week, and from a hundred and fifty to two hundred sheep. If these killing-powers are delegated to the large companies I should lose nearly the whole of my offal, and this at the end of the year would amount to a very considerable sum. I do not think any of the small butchers object to inspection; but if we are to have inspection, let us have public municipal abattoirs.

10. *Hon. the Chairman.*] There are no abattoirs at present in Wellington?—No, sir.

11. Where is the butchering done principally?—It is done by the Gear Company, the Meat-export company, the Banks Company, and myself, and one or two other butchers.

12. The greater part of the work, I believe, is done by the two companies?—Yes.

13. Can you tell the Committee how many private slaughterhouses there are?—About eight or nine.

14. Do they supply the town only, or town and country?—Town and country.

15. I suppose the Gear Company supplies some of the shops?—The Gear Company supplies their own shops only.

16. Then, a very large proportion are supplied by the Wellington Meat-export Company?—Yes, the Meat-export Company and a private company.

17. What is this private company—a number of butchers?—No; it is a private company lately established.

18. And supposing public abattoirs were established, there would be no need for the small butchers to go to any of these companies to get their supplies?—None whatever, if they preferred buying stock and having it killed at the abattoirs.

19. And if the Municipal Corporation were to delegate their powers to either of the large companies you would lose sight of the greater part of the offal?—Yes, the greater part.

20. And if abattoirs were erected?—There would be a by-law controlling the distribution of the offal.

21. I suppose you know there is inspection at these companies' works?—Yes.

22. *Mr. Hogg.*] I suppose what you really object to is that there should be private proprietors of these abattoirs. You consider that the abattoirs should be public property?—I consider so.

23. Do you object to companies, such as the Gear Company and the Wellington Meat-export Company, having shops and selling beef and mutton?—No, I do not object to that. I object to the Corporation being able to delegate their powers with regard to abattoirs to either of these companies.

24. Do you know if there is any objection to their supplying butchers?—No, I do not think so.

25. I suppose what you mean in regard to the offal is that, if killing is carried on in public

abattoirs instead of by the companies, the butchers will have their offal conserved to them?—Exactly.

26. *Hon. Mr. Duncan.*] What you mean is that you wish abattoirs established in Wellington similar to the abattoirs established in Christchurch?—Yes.

27. Then, these companies who sell meat in Wellington would have to come under the provisions of the Slaughtering and Inspection Act, and would have to pay accordingly to the Corporation so much per head?—Yes. That would be for all meat for local consumption.

28. You think that if abattoirs were established by the Corporation you would be better off with regard to your offal than if the killing was done by either of the companies?—Most decidedly.

29. *Mr. Lawry.*] How do you work up your by-products now?—I have a boiling-down plant.

30. *Mr. Kirkbride.*] I would like to ask you how the cattle and sheep are being slaughtered now. Do you do it at your own slaughterhouse?—Yes; I am a wholesale and retail butcher.

31. You said, "If we are to have inspection let us have abattoirs." Is there no inspection now?—There is inspection at the present time at the companies' works, but not at any of the other slaughterhouses.

32. Is there not inspection at your slaughterhouse?—No.

33. Do not the large companies, the Meat-export Company especially, slaughter at the present time for any of the small butchers of Wellington?—I think they do occasionally, but it is only occasionally. They do not do it at a general rule. It may be an odd lot.

34. They kill at so much per head?—Yes.

35. Do you know what their charges are?—In 1900 it was advertised in the local papers as 3s. per head for bullocks.

36. Is not the charge per head for slaughtering at the Meat-export Company's works in Wellington very much less than the charges in Christchurch?—I know they have advertised their prices a great deal, but I have seen an account which did not come out according to the prices advertised.

37. I mention this because I believe the Wellington Meat-export Company offer to do the slaughtering at about half the price charged at the public abattoirs in Christchurch?—Possibly that may be so; but I have known their charges to be much higher than the prices advertised.

38. You said you would lose a considerable quantity of your offal: what do you mean by that?—I mean that I shall lose sight of my plucks and runners, and my heads would not be taken into account—my sheep's heads and bullocks' heads—and then I should lose my boiling-down.

39. Would you not lose these in the public abattoirs?—No, I do not think so.

40. Do you anticipate that you would lose any of this offal at the public abattoirs?—No, I do not.

41. Well, I cannot see the difference. If the Wellington Meat-export Company, for instance, is made the abattoirs for Wellington—if they have these powers delegated to them—I cannot see why you would not be allowed for your offal just the same as at a public abattoir?—Well, that is not the case at present, and I conclude they will continue in the same course they are pursuing now if these powers were delegated to them.

42. Would you very much prefer your present method of killing to having public abattoirs erected here?—I think I should.

43. Do you object to these companies—the Gear Company and the other companies—slaughtering for butchers in Wellington? Do you object to that?—No, I do not object to that.

44. You say you are a wholesale and retail butcher: do you slaughter for yourself and others?—Yes.

45. You are a carcase-butcher?—Yes.

46. Do you slaughter without inspection?—Yes, sir.

47. Do you slaughter as many bullocks as the Gear Company or the Wellington Meat-export Company?—Oh, no; but the Banks Company and the combined small butchers slaughter a number about equal to the number slaughtered by the Wellington Meat-export Company.

48. And they all kill without inspection?—I believe they do.

49. *Hon. Mr. Pitt.*] What is the distance from Wellington to your slaughterhouse?—About eleven miles.

50. Well, as far as I can see, if this Bill is passed it will not alter your position?—Oh, yes, for my Wellington trade only; not for my Hutt trade.

51. Section 15 of the principal Act says, "In lieu of itself establishing an abattoir, the local authority or authorities, with the exception of the local authorities respectively of the Cities of Wellington, Dunedin, Christchurch, Auckland, and the Borough of Invercargill, and any local authorities within a radius of eight miles of the aforesaid cities and borough, may delegate to any fit person or persons the power to establish the same upon such terms and conditions as, with the previous approval of the Minister, are agreed on." That is the Act of 1900. Now, this present Act merely includes Wellington, Dunedin, Christchurch, Auckland, and Invercargill, and boroughs within eight miles of these centres. Now, you say you are eleven miles away?—That is so.

52. *Hon. the Chairman.*] But you could not sell in Wellington?—No, unless meat killed at an abattoir.

53. *Hon. Mr. Pitt.*] You cannot sell in Wellington now?—Oh, yes.

54. *Hon. the Chairman.*] If the abattoirs were established, which would be the most convenient place, in your opinion, for the whole of the District of Wellington?—I have not any place to recommend.

55. With respect to the offal and heads, and so on, do the large companies now take all the heads and offal?—The greater part.

56. Everything connected with the head—the tongue, and so on?—No; not the tongue nor the heart.

57. With regard to inspection, does not the Inspector come round to you at all?—The Inspector of Slaughterhouses, but not the Inspector of Meat.

58. In other words, your meat is not inspected by anybody?—No.

59. Never at all?—No.

Mr. W. J. GARRETT, Butcher, examined. (No. 2.)

60. *Hon. the Chairman.*] What is your name?—William John Garrett.

61. And your occupation?—I am a butcher in Wellington.

62. You have heard the manner in which we are conducting the inquiry. Have you acquainted yourself with the Bill?—Yes, sir.

63. Will you then take the clauses you wish to call attention to and make a statement to the Committee?—There is only one clause I wish to call attention to, and that is the clause relating to the delegation of power.

64. *Hon. Mr. McLean.*] Which clause is that?—Clause 7.

65. *Hon. the Chairman.*] And your reasons?—The reasons have been given a great many times. Deputations from Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, and also Wellington have appeared before this Committee in previous years objecting to this delegation of power.

66. *Hon. Mr. Pitt.*] On what grounds?—Well, most of the butchers do not like the large companies to know their business. That is one of the principal points. For instance, the small butcher may go to a farm and buy a few sheep, and the big company will find out where they are coming from. This is of vital importance to the small butcher, and we strongly object to these powers with regard to abattoirs being delegated to any of the large companies. We should prefer the municipal body to erect these abattoirs. That is the only clause I wish to mention. I think evidence was brought before the Hon. Mr. McKenzie, when he was Minister of Lands, on this Bill with regard to this matter, and that evidence was brought from Auckland and other different parts of the colony. Evidence was given on this matter several times when the Bill was before the House, and I believe a committee of butchers waited upon the Premier; and in the principal Bill as passed in 1900 this delegation of power was not allowed in the large centres of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Invercargill. But we now find it is in this amending Bill. Certainly there is a saving clause to the effect that the consent of the Minister shall first be obtained, and I believe we shall be quite safe with the present Minister, but this Bill is for all time. We are quite confident the present Minister will not allow a town like Wellington to shirk its responsibilities, but at the same time we would ask that this delegation of powers with regard to abattoirs by the municipal bodies be not allowed. It has been said that the establishment of public abattoirs here by the City Council would not be a financial success—that they would be a white elephant. That is not so, because fees would be charged against the whole of the meat coming into Wellington under the Act. The companies will have to pay the killing-fees for all meat for local consumption, just the same even if the slaughtering is done at their own works. Therefore the abattoirs would be a financial success from the very start. The Corporation could borrow money from the Government and erect the abattoirs, and these fees would start coming in at once. It is only a scare to say that public municipal abattoirs would be a white elephant. The City of Wellington is going ahead—look at our trams and our Town Hall—and there should be public municipal abattoirs here. The Government would lend the money to erect the abattoirs, and the companies will help to pay the fees. I cannot see why we should not get very cheap fees, because three-quarters of the meat will come from the companies, and they will thus pay a very large proportion of the abattoir's fees, and consequently the fees will be reduced to the smaller butchers. I think if municipal abattoirs were erected they would be a financial success, and that the fees to the small butchers here would be very low.

67. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Where is your establishment?—At Ngahauranga.

68. Have you any opinion as to which would be the best site for public abattoirs?—A suitable site is very hard to pick, and I would rather not express any opinion.

69. Where is the greater part of this slaughtering done at present?—The principal part of the town supply comes from the Wellington Meat-export Company's works at Ngahauranga, but the Gear Company slaughter a large quantity for their private shops.

70. The Gear Company does slaughtering for themselves only?—Yes. Then there is another company—the Banks Meat Company. They supply some of the small butchers.

71. With regard to the offal, does that go to the company or to the small butcher?—When I have dealt with the companies I have never had any offal. If abattoirs are erected proper arrangements will be made with regard to the offal, and a return of so much per head will be made to the small butcher.

72. With regard to inspection, what is your experience? Is there any inspection of the meat you kill?—No. One of the officers of the Department comes out and sometimes goes into the shop. I have seen Mr. Reakes, Mr. Gilruth, and several other veterinary surgeons there.

73. But there is a regular inspection of the meat?—No, there is no regular inspection in a private slaughterhouse. There is inspection at the companies' works. The small butcher should be protected, because he is a good man in many ways. He will buy small lots from the farmer on perhaps better terms than the companies will give, as the companies, as a rule, buy in large mobs. Anything which will tend to wipe out the small butchers or decrease their liberty will certainly be a bad thing in many ways.

74. *Mr. Rhodes.*] You spoke about the companies finding out the sources of your supplies. Do you think there would be greater secrecy at municipal abattoirs?—I think so.

75. You do not think, for instance, rival butchers killing at the same time would find out these particulars?—Well, of two evils it is best to choose the least. We are not afraid of the small men. Very often two or three of us combine together to buy a larger line. I have very often combined with other butchers in this way.

76. Do you think that the Gear Company, so far as their retail trade here is concerned, ought to kill at the abattoirs?—That is a very open question. I think, if they paid the fees upon all meat killed for the trade here, they would be contributing sufficiently towards the abattoirs. Some butchers think that all meat killed for local consumption should be killed in the municipal abattoirs, but I think that if the companies paid the fees they would be doing something towards it, and it would put us all on the same footing.

77. It is a similar arrangement they have in Christchurch?—I believe it is.

78. And you think that would answer well?—Yes, I think that is the fairest way.

79. *Mr. Lawry.*] Do you kill many pigs in your trade?—No, sir.

80. Have you made yourself familiar with clause 3 of this Bill?—Yes.

81. Do you think it is necessary with regard to pigs that the heads shall not be removed and the pluck shall be left adhering to the dressed carcase by the windpipe until the carcase is to be cut up for retail sale or for curing?—Yes, I think that is necessary. If you are going to have strict and fair inspection of meat you should of course inspect the whole carcase, and the pluck should certainly be inspected.

82. *Mr. Kirkbride.*] Do I understand you, Mr. Garrett, to say that you have never had any stock slaughtered at the Meat-export slaughterhouses excepting on emergency?—That is so.

83. What is their charge for killing?—8s., I believe. That covers cost of delivery.

84. That covers the railage into Wellington?—No, the cartage.

85. You anticipate that public abattoirs would be a financial success?—Yes, sir.

86. *Mr. McLachlan.*] You say the small butchers buy small lots from the farmers which are not suitable for the freezing companies. Is that correct?—No; we buy small lines, say, forty or fifty sheep, for instance, which might not be suitable for freezing. The quality would be all right, but there would not be the quantity.

87. *Hon. Mr. Pitt.*] Do you know why the local authorities in Wellington object to erect abattoirs?—They look at the expense, and they think it would be a white elephant.

88. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Would you charge the companies the full rate? Suppose they do all their work at home, would you still charge them the full rate?—I should charge them for killing, but not for carving.

89. The full rate?—Yes.

90. Would it not be hard on the people who sold to the companies?—The people who sell to the companies do so for the purpose of freezing for export.

91. But is it not necessary to the successful working of these companies that they should have an outlet of this sort?—Yes, that is so; but I think the idea has been all along that they should pay their killing-fees, and I believe they also express themselves as willing to do so.

92. *Hon. Mr. Duncan.*] Would you sooner stop as you are, without abattoirs and without inspection?—Well, I think the time is coming now when all places should be inspected, and I do not see how you could have an inspection over every place unless you bring the killing together in some way or other.

Mr. JOHN ROD, Butcher, examined. (No. 3.)

93. *Hon. the Chairman.*] What is your name?—John Rod.

94. Occupation?—Butcher.

95. Where?—In Wellington and Porirua.

96. You have heard the evidence, and you understand the Bill?—Yes, sir. I object to the delegation of powers by the Municipal Corporation with regard to abattoirs to the companies upon the same lines as Mr. Gadsby and Mr. Garrett. I know there is a very strong agitation about this clause. I do not think that a city like Wellington should be without public abattoirs. Let us have public abattoirs, and the city will get the benefit in years to come.

97. Are there any other points in the Bill you wish to draw attention to?—No.

98. *Mr. Rhodes.*] What is your experience as to present inspection?—Well, there is practically no inspection. A man comes round now and again, but there is practically no inspection of the meat.

99. You have heard what the other witnesses have said with regard to the companies. Is that also your experience?—Yes, I think so.

100. Do you ever do any business with them?—Very little; just odds and ends.

101. *Mr. Lawry.*] Your slaughterhouse is at Porirua?—Yes, sir.

102. Are you satisfied if present conditions continue?—I would sooner go on under present conditions.

103. The next best thing would be to have public abattoirs?—Yes, sir.

104. It would be more economical for you?—Yes.

105. *Mr. McLachlan.*] You are not under inspection now?—No.

106. *Hon. Mr. Duncan.*] Would you be prepared to pay for inspection?—That all depends upon the cost.

107. Do you think public inspection not necessary in New Zealand?—Well, I do not know. There is very little disease in bullocks now. It is principally amongst the cows.

108. But you have seen bullocks diseased?—Yes, sir.

Mr. ISAAC SYKES, Manager of the Banks Meat Company, examined. (No. 4.)

109. *Hon. the Chairman.*] What is your name?—Isaac Sykes.

110. And your occupation?—I am manager of the Banks Meat Company, Kaiwarra.

111. You have read the Bill?—Yes, sir.

112. And you have heard the evidence already given to the Committee?—Yes, sir.

113. Will you make a statement to the Committee?—The clause I wish to refer to is clause 4. Before proceeding further I should like to explain to the Committee how our company is com-

posed, because we are in rather a peculiar position. We are a wholesale company, and at the same time we are a co-operative company—that is to say, any butcher can buy shares in our company, and at the present time we have fifteen retail butchers as shareholders and some forty-five farmers. It is open to retail butchers and farmers to take shares in our company, but no one else.

114. Where are your works?—At the present time we are slaughtering in a slaughterhouse between Kaiwarra and Ngahauranga, but we have in course of erection an abattoir at Ngahauranga. Now, if these public abattoirs are erected in Wellington, it will fall very heavily upon the retail butchers. In Wellington we have a number of butchers whose business does not extend over three bodies a week, and it would be a great hardship to them if abattoirs were established, because they would have to go out into the open market and buy the stock. In the first place, Wellington is excluded from the farming community. The retail butchers in Wellington at present do not kill for themselves, except in very few instances. The killing is done by small wholesale butchers and by the companies. If they did kill for themselves they would have to practically depend upon the Johnsonville saleyards, and a shortage there at any time would necessitate these small butchers—and some of them only kill a body and a half, some of them two bodies, and some three bodies a week—going a distance up to the Wairarapa, or to Palmerston, to buy stock; and then to get it railed at the cheapest rate they would have to take from two or three, and with some of them four weeks' supply. A truck of cattle carries eight. They would, therefore, have to take eight head of cattle in order to get them railed down here at the cheapest rate. They would similarly also have to buy sixty sheep to get them down here at the cheapest rate, and therefore it would be a hardship upon them. Our shareholders therefore strongly object to the erection of these public abattoirs. I think, sir, you have a letter from a Mr. A. Duncan, stating that it was impossible for him to represent the butchers this morning on account of the short notice given him. He represents some thirty-four butchers, who signed a petition to the City Council asking them, before this Bill was brought down, to get a clause inserted in it similar to clause 7, which would allow of the delegation of their powers to any company which has its meat killed under inspection. I may state that we want public inspection for our killing. We have asked for it, but our present premises are not suitable, and therefore we are going into better premises, so that we shall be able to have proper inspection. I think the Committee will see how it would affect the small retail butchers if these public abattoirs were erected. For instance, say, on a Tuesday, the small retail butcher may go to the sale, and he may find the price so excessive, in consequence of a shortage of stock at the Johnsonville yards, that he has to go up the country. I would also point out that a large number of these retail butchers in Wellington are not capable of buying stock on the hoof. They have not had the practical experience necessary. They have been used to the shops, to getting their meat already killed, and they have never been used to buying the meat on the hoof. They would, therefore, have to depend upon other people to do the buying for them, and this would necessitate more labour and expense in carrying on their business. It would mean that some of the small butchers would not be able to compete with other members of the trade, who are doing six or seven bodies a week, and who are pretty well up to the purchase of stock on the hoof. We also object to clause 7 as it stands at present. Suppose a delegation of power was made by the Wellington City Council to the Wellington Meat-export Company. We contend that under such circumstances neither the Gear Company nor the Banks Co-operative Meat Company, nor any other company killing meat under Government inspection should be forced to pay the fees to that company, as would have to be the case if these powers were delegated to them. As far as the company I represent are concerned, we have no objection to either the Wellington Meat-export Company or the Gear Company being appointed abattoirs. We do not wish for it ourselves; but we do think it would be unfair for us to have to pay fees to any other company. I think you will find that there are only a small number of the butchers in Wellington favourable to the establishment of public abattoirs. I should not say there would be more than eleven or twelve of them. I do not include the suburbs in this calculation—that is, the Taita, Lower Hutt, Pororua, &c.—because I think they are out of the radius. There are only about eleven, or, at the outside, twelve butchers in Wellington who really wish for public abattoirs, and they are the larger butchers who are doing a larger trade, and who have been used to buying cattle on the hoof all their lives. To show that the company I represent is composed to a great extent of small butchers, I should like to hand to the Committee our articles of association, by which you will see that four of the directors are retail butchers in Wellington. We are not a capitalist company. We are a co-operative company of small butchers and farmers. [Document handed in.]

115. *Hon. the Chairman.*] You say your company is completing a new abattoir?—Yes, sir.

116. What style of a place is it? Is it up to date?—Yes, it is up to date. The plans were passed by Mr. Reakes.

117. What are the capabilities of the place?—We can kill thirty head of cattle and two hundred sheep daily, and it is built with a view to extension.

118. How far is it on now?—Well, it is over a third done.

119. Where is it?—It is on a section just at the back of the Wellington Meat-export Company's works. I may as well state the position we were in, and the reasons we had to make a start to build this abattoir. We bought out Mr. G. W. Banks, and we were killing in the old slaughterhouse, when we received notice from the Department that if we did not take steps to have another building erected our license would be cancelled. We then approached the City Council, through Mr. Gilruth, asking them if they were taking any steps with regard to public abattoirs. This was in March last. And they said at that time that they were leaving it to the new Council to decide. Well, under the circumstances we had either to erect a new building or close up altogether. So we bought a property at the back of the Meat-export Company and started

the erection of abattoirs, because we had no promise from the City Council that they would erect public abattoirs, and even at the present time they are no further ahead in regard to this matter.

120. Is your connection amongst the small butchers likely to increase when your new works are erected?—Yes.

121. Your clients will be largely of the smaller class of butcher?—Yes.

122. Those who only want a limited quantity of meat at a time?—Yes, the small butcher.

123. You mentioned a Mr. Duncan just now, who was not able to attend. What class of butchers does he represent?—He was coming here to speak on behalf of some thirty-four small retail butchers, but on account of the short notice he has been unable to get away. He would have liked to come here to explain the position to the Committee, but he writes me to say it is impossible for him to get away. The majority of these small butchers are their own shopmen, and unless they have three or four days' notice it is impossible for them to get any one to take their place, and therefore they are unable to leave their shops.

124. Do you know their views?—Their views are that they will be satisfied if they can procure their meat from the Wellington Meat-export Company, the Gear Company, or the Banks Company.

125. They do not slaughter themselves?—No, and they do not wish for abattoirs to be compulsorily erected, so long as the meat they receive from the companies is properly inspected.

126. Well, what is your experience about inspection? Have you any?—We have not got inspection. We want inspection, because we want our meat to be the same in the market as the Meat-export Company's meat and the Gear Company's.

127. Well, supposing abattoirs were erected and your company went on, would you think it a hardship to have to pay the abattoir rate?—Yes, we should consider it a hardship, because we have the whole of the appliances there for doing the business, and it would be hardly fair that we should also have to contribute towards public abattoirs. We should be compelled to pay our fees, and would so help to lower the fees to the other butchers who want the abattoirs. We think they are trying to make us pay for what they want, and what we do not want.

128. Can you tell the Committee whether many of the thirty-four butchers Mr. Duncan mentions in his letter are your clients?—Some are not. Some of them are the Wellington Meat-export Company's clients.

129. *Hon. Mr. T. Kelly.*] I understand you are a co-operative company of farmers and butchers. Is that correct?—Yes.

130. Do you keep any shops?—No, sir. We only supply wholesale.

131. To butchers even if they are not members of your company?—Yes.

132. You do not retail?—No, we do not retail.

133. *Hon. Mr. Duncan.*] How many bullocks do you kill?—We kill from fifty up to sixty bullocks a week.

134. And how many sheep?—From 370 to 450.

135. When you have your new premises erected do you intend to have your meat inspected?—Yes, sir.

136. And are you supposed to pay £220 a year for an Inspector to inspect the meat?—Yes, sir. We are quite prepared to do so. We have taken that into consideration.

137. And did you take into consideration the fees you would possibly have to pay to public abattoirs if erected?—Well, we had to take that into consideration. We were between the "devil and the deep sea." On the one side we had the City Council who would not erect abattoirs, and on the other side we had the Agricultural Department saying, "If you do not start to build we will put you out of existence."

138. Is it not the case that you only wanted to erect more suitable premises for yourselves?—Well, we have not erected abattoirs for anybody else but ourselves.

139. But you knew exactly what the law was with regard to public abattoirs?—Yes, if they were erected.

140. Then, of course, you intend to do your best not to have these public abattoirs erected?—Well, the majority of the butchers who kill under inspection think that if the powers were delegated to all of the companies it would not be necessary to have public abattoirs. That would be sufficient so long as the meat was inspected properly.

141. You have heard the evidence given by Mr. Gadsby, Mr. Garrett, and Mr. Rod?—Yes, sir.

142. They did not seem to think that this delegation of power would be the right thing?—No, sir. But they are only three who are in favour of public abattoirs.

143. How many do they represent?—They may represent a dozen. I do not think they represent more than a dozen. I claim that Mr. Gadsby is out of the district. He is at the Taita, and that is beyond the distance mentioned in the Act.

144. But he does business in Wellington?—Oh, yes, a wholesale business.

145. *Mr. McLachlan.*] I should like to repeat my question with regard to inspection. Is it a fact that butchers killing outside the radius without inspection can sell diseased meat in Wellington—that this meat is sold at the butchers' shops?—Yes, that is so; but we object to it. Meat has been killed without inspection and supplied to the town.

Mr. R. H. JOHNSON, Butcher, examined. (No. 5.)

146. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Your name?—Robert H. Johnson.

147. Occupation?—Butcher.

148. And address?—Tinakori Road, Wellington.

149. Will you make a statement to the Committee?—All I wish to state is that, if we are to have abattoirs, I for one desire to have public abattoirs. I am killing for myself, and I desire public abattoirs, not private abattoirs by any means. That is what I wish to bring forward. I do not feel disposed to go and kill at any other slaughterhouse than my own, unless it is a public one.

150. What is your business?—About fifty sheep and about six or seven bodies of beef.
151. A week?—Yes.
152. Have you any inspection at all?—No, we have none at present. None of the private slaughterhouses have inspection.
153. Then you are in favour of public abattoirs?—Yes, decidedly so.
154. *Hon. Mr. T. Kelly.*] Where do you slaughter?—At Mr. Garrett's.
155. Is that in Wellington?—On the road to Johnsonville.
156. How far from the city?—About four miles and a half.
157. And there is no inspection?—No. Only the Meat-export Company and the Gear Company have their meat inspected.
158. How many of you kill at this slaughterhouse?—There are three of us—Mr. Garrett, Mr. Baker, and myself.
159. What number of bullocks and sheep approximately?—About twenty bullocks and two hundred sheep a week.
160. And the meat is sold in Wellington?—Yes, and Johnsonville.
161. And there is no inspection?—No.
162. *Mr. Rhodes.*] Are you of the same opinion as the other witnesses with regard to the offal? Do you think you would lose a certain proportion of the offal if you had to slaughter at the freezing companies' works?—I do not think we should lose more than we do at present. It would be just about the same.
163. You would not gain as regards the offal if the stock were slaughtered in municipal abattoirs?—Oh, yes, decidedly. If abattoirs were erected by the municipal authorities I think we should gain decidedly more of the offal.
164. *Mr. McLachlan.*] You would prefer a municipal institution to a private one?—Certainly.
165. Where do you find the leakage in the offal? You get the heads when you want them, the heart, the tail, and the carcase? Do you get the paunch and the tripe?—No; we have no facility for working them up in a private slaughteryard.

Mr. R. GILKES, Butcher, examined. (No. 6.)

166. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Your name?—Robert Gilkes.
167. Occupation?—Butcher.
168. Place of business?—Courtenay Place, Wellington.
169. Where do you slaughter?—I am not slaughtering anywhere. I get all my meat from the Meat-export Company or the Banks Company.
170. Just as you want it?—Yes.
171. What business do you do?—About six or seven bullocks a week, and a proportionate amount of small stuff, sheep, lambs, and pigs.
172. Do you favour the erection of public abattoirs?—No, sir, I do not. I consider it would inflict a great amount of hardship upon myself and other small butchers. We should have to neglect our businesses in town while we go to the various sales to pick up stock, and in a great many instances we should not be able to get stock.
173. And what about the carriage of small lots down?—From the sales?
174. Yes?—That would have to be taken into consideration as well, undoubtedly. There is no doubt that the very best method of supplying the small butchers is by means of the larger companies. In the first place, all meat supplied to us by the Wellington Meat-export Company is killed under the supervision of a Government Veterinary Surgeon.
175. Is there any particular clause of the Bill you wish to refer to?—The only clause I wish to refer to is the clause which permits the delegation of powers by the municipal authorities. I think this power should be delegated to some institution such as the Wellington Meat-export Company. Let their works be made the abattoirs. At the same time I do not consider it would be right to ask the other companies to pay the abattoirs fees if they are killing stock under proper inspection. These companies have been at great expense in erecting buildings and putting up up-to-date plant for killing stock, and it would not be fair to ask them to pay abattoir fees except when they absolutely make use of the abattoirs. I think I am speaking on behalf of about thirty-four or thirty-five of the retail butchers of Wellington, and I think they are all situated something similar to myself as regards having to buy their stock. If they have to buy their stock on the hoof and do their killing, &c., they will be at a great disadvantage.
176. How many butchers' shops outside the Gear Company's shops are there in Wellington?—Outside of the Gear Company I think there are about fifty-two or fifty-three.
177. *Hon. Mr. T. Kelly.*] You do not slaughter yourself at all?—No, sir.
178. You buy?—Yes, from the Wellington Meat-export Company or the Banks Meat Company. The meat I buy from the Wellington Meat-export Company is inspected by a Government Veterinary Surgeon, and the Banks Company will also have inspection when their new premises are erected.
179. You carry on business to more advantage than if you killed yourself?—Undoubtedly. We get a larger percentage of offal from the company than we should get if we killed ourselves. I know this is in flat contradiction to some of the evidence which has been given here this morning. Say, a butcher only buys six bullocks a week, it is possible for him to get twelve tongues or twelve tails. He gets as many ox tongues and suchlike as he requires.
180. He would have to pay extra for them?—Oh, yes; but in the event of a man buying his own stock and having it killed at the company's works, they would not in any way do him out of any of the offal. They would give it to him.
181. You have had it back in that way?—Personally, I have not. But I am absolutely certain about it. In fact you can get your quota of blood if necessary.



182. Do these companies charge what they consider their own price? Is there any contract?—No, absolutely none. I think the Meat-export Company have a fixed rate. At any rate, I am sure they would not be hard in any way upon small butchers, because, as far as I can make out, they have always done whatever they could to help the small butcher along.

183. How is the price regulated—according to the price of stock in the market, or what?—Yes, according to the price of stock in the market.

184. The prices vary?—Yes, prices vary at certain times of the year. The Home market affects the local market. The papers publish every week the average prices for bullocks and sheep at the principal saleyards in the colony.

185. Have you any power as to regulating the price, or must you accept the prices charged by the companies?—We have to accept the prices charged by the companies.

186. You have no power to alter it?—No.

187. With regard to the quality, what quality of meat do you get?—At the present time we are receiving the first quality. They are not killing much for export at present.

188. But when they are exporting?—When they are exporting we undoubtedly get the rougher carcasses among the second-class mutton if we buy any. Not in any case unfit for use. They may be slightly bruised, or too fat or too lean for export, and so on.

189. Do I understand that in such a case you must take what you can get?—Yes; if we wish to try to do better we have the other wholesale butchers to deal with, or can buy alive if we like to do so.

190. And that may be second class?—Not necessarily.

191. They will sell it to you as first class?—Yes, of course, if it is first class; the price is more for wethers than it is for ewes.

192. Then the class of meat you get from the companies will depend upon the price paid to them?—Yes.

193. Do you buy first class always, or do you buy second class?—At the present time wethers are 3½d. and ewes 3¼d. I buy as many ewes as possible.

194. With regard to beef, what is the price of first-class and second-class beef?—I think ox-beef is 19s. and heifer-beef is 17s. per 100 lb.

195. *Mr. Bollard.*] You are in favour of public abattoirs?—No.

196. You think it would be better for the butchers to buy from the meat companies?—I do.

197. Do you not think that would minimise competition?—No; I think the abattoirs would create more competition. The small butchers would then have to go and buy in competition with the large companies' buyers, who have an unlimited amount of money to offer for stock.

198. You think that butchers should buy from the meat companies, and you admit that public abattoirs would increase competition?—Yes.

199. Well, now, are you not completely in the hands of the meat companies as to the price paid?—No; I do not think we could do as well for ourselves if we were buying on the hoof.

200. Is it desirable from a farmer's point of view that the companies only should purchase their stock?—I think the farmers are very well satisfied at the present time with the price they are getting for their stock.

201. But you admit as a matter of fact that public abattoirs would cause more competition?—They would in such places as Johnsonville, but not up the country where the companies' buyers are. They are able to give a farmer an advance of £500 on a mob of cattle probably not fit to lift for a few months. They can secure them by this means, and pay the balance when they lift them.

202. Do you think you will get the advantage of that by buying from the companies?—Yes.

203. You admit that competition increases the price in ordinary trade?—Yes, but it will increase the price to such an extent that the larger butchers will be able to outclass the smaller butchers altogether. Suppose a small man starts in business here. He can get a side of beef at a time and two or three sheep. If he had to go up country to buy that, and to drive it and to kill it himself, the expense would take all the profit away.

204. Then, you believe in encouraging monopoly?—I believe in leaving well alone. The small butchers here are very well satisfied.

205. *Hon. Mr. Duncan.*] You mentioned that you pay 3½d. for wethers and 3¼d. for ewes. Is that a continual price, or is it just from time to time?—That is the price which was fixed about three weeks ago.

206. Present quotations?—Yes.

207. And you said you could do better by dealing with the companies than you would if there were public abattoirs?—Yes; that is if it is necessary for me to buy my stock and kill it at the abattoirs.

208. But is it absolutely necessary that you should?—Yes. It is not always advantageous to deal with small wholesale men who would be using abattoirs if erected.

209. Yet you say it is an advantage now?—We can get better meat and more extra stuff from the companies than is possible with the small wholesale people.

210. You mentioned tongues?—I have taken as many as fifty at a time.

211. Do you do that many times?—Oh, no.

212. The companies killing for export have far more tongues than they want?—Yes, that is so.

213. Suppose there was no public abattoirs, and not likely to be any public abattoirs, the companies could charge you just what they wished. You would have to pay whatever they asked you?—For beef?

214. For all meat?—Yes, certainly.

215. You could either take it or leave it?—Yes.

216. Do you think that is a proper condition of affairs?—Do you not think it would be better to have abattoirs and an open market?—Well, I have had nearly five years' experience in dealing with the companies, and I am quite sure that I am better off when dealing with the companies than I should be if I had to deal with the small wholesale butcher.

217. Then you mentioned another matter. You said that companies would give you the whole of the offal if you wanted it?—Yes, that is when they are killing stock for clients.

218. Could you deal with the offal to advantage?—No.

219. Well, what is the use of it to you?—It is of no use to me. The blood, for instance, is of no use.

220. Well, if you had public abattoirs you would get your proportion of the offal. You would get your share of everything. It would not have to be carted away. It would be manufactured, and you would get the value of your proportion?—I was not aware of that.

221. *Mr. Rhodes.*] Are there many like yourself now getting their meat from the Meat-export Company?—About thirty-five, I should think.

222. And you are voicing the opinion of the others?—Yes, of the majority.

223. If you want a particular line of meat, do you have to take what the company sends you, or do you select it?—I think we should be allowed to select it. I have heard of it being done. At the present time I have to take the best.

224. Whether you are satisfied or not?—Yes. I wanted ewes, but they told me I should have to take wethers.

225. Then, you are in their hands as regards price and as regards quality?—Yes, we are in their hands; but, at the same time, it is a good job we are situated as we are.

226. Would they call first-class mutton a carcass which has one bruise on it?—Yes; but badly bruised mutton is not first class.

227. It is classed as second class?—If a wether is bruised slightly it would come in as first class. If it is badly bruised it would be second class. When they are killing as many as two or three thousand a day this second-class meat may be equal to the best frozen in many ways. There might be a slight tear in the fell or inner skin, or there might be some other fault in the dressing. It may not look quite so nice.

228. *Hon. Mr. Duncan.*] They go by the name of "rejects"?—Yes, "rejects."

229. *Mr. Lawry.*] In very hot weather when the meat is very perishable, you find it an advantage to buy just to suit your own needs?—Yes, undoubtedly.

230. You think you have an advantage over those who buy alive and kill themselves?—Yes.

231. You can take a quarter where they will have to take a whole carcass?—Yes.

232. *Hon. Mr. McLean.*] You think that there are about thirty-five of you dealing with the companies?—Yes.

233. Supposing these abattoir powers were delegated to one of the companies, would you get as much then?—Certainly, and more. I presume we should then have the option of buying live stock and having it killed there should we wish to do so.

234. But do you not think that it would be putting a definite power into the hands of the companies to squeeze your people whenever they wanted to?—Not necessarily. As far as I am personally concerned, I consider the companies are not treating us badly at all.

235. The companies make arrangements as to what prices they pay up country to the farmers, I believe, so you will get the advantage of that?—It has never struck me in that light. I imagine that the companies are paying very fair prices all round at present. I see by the papers they are paying as high as £1 10s. per head for sheep.

236. The sheep here I believe are sometimes shipped down to Canterbury and sold as Canterbury mutton. Where are they paying that price now?—That is in Canterbury.

237. When have they paid £1 10s. for fat sheep here?—Not here; in Canterbury.

238. Have they at any time paid £1 5s. here?—Yes, £1 7s. 6d.

239. Can you give us a case?—At Johnsonville.

240. There must have been very few sheep?—No, there was a fair quantity of sheep in at the sale. I think I remember a line of ewes withdrawn at £1 2s.

241. That is different from £1 10s.?—Yes, but I have seen wethers sold at £1 7s. 6d.

242. How often?—Not often.

243. Now, do you not think the erection of abattoirs is the fairest way to deal with this matter. There cannot then be any rigging of prices as there might be supposing these powers were put into the hands of one of the companies?—Well, the rigging of prices by the wholesale butcher is an advantage to the small butcher.

244. One would suppose, from the way you answered Mr. Rhodes's questions, that you were getting the rejects very cheap?—Well, I do not think we are getting anything very cheap. Three-pence three farthings for wether-mutton and 3½d. for ewe-mutton, and 19s. for ox-beef is not cheap.

245. Is that a high price?—Yes, taking everything into consideration.

246. How many shops has the Meat-export Company in Wellington?—Not any.

247. And the Gear Company?—They have several—four in Wellington.

248. The Meat-export Company have no shops?—No.

249. Whose is that shop on Lambton Quay?—You mean Barber and Co.

250. I think the Wellington Meat-export Company have their offices there. Is that not a Wellington Meat-export Company's shop?—I do not think so. Mr. Barber does all the business there.

251. There are no other butchers in their hands?—No, they do not do any retail business at all.

252. Are you in the hands of any company?—No, sir, I am not. There is one thing they do not allow us to do. They do not allow us to run our accounts on for more than a week.

253. Well, supposing these powers were conferred upon the companies, you would then be in their hands. Would you like to be entirely in their hands?—I do not think it would be necessary for us to be in their hands. Suppose the three companies—the Meat-export Company, the Gear Company, and the Banks Company—suppose each of them had power to kill the meat just the same as it would be killed at the public abattoirs, I do not consider it would be any disadvantage to the butcher at all. In fact, it would be an advantage, because they have every facility and every up-to-date idea in connection with their plants for the killing and distribution of stock.

254. Will not that prevent competition?—There will always be a certain amount of competition.

255. But would not that be to the disadvantage of the farmers?—I think the farmers can take care of themselves.

256. *Mr. McLachlan.*] Did you ever know a farmer who was victimised by a butcher?—No.

257. Did you ever know a butcher who was victimised by a farmer?—Yes.

Mr. W. DIMOCK, Bacon-curer, examined. (No. 7.)

258. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Your name is—?—W. Dimock.

259. Are you in business in Wellington?—Yes, as a bacon-curer.

260. Will you make a statement to the Committee?—The clause I wish to bring under your notice is clause 3 subclause (c): "Notwithstanding anything in the principal Act, any person may, on the land or premises in his own occupation, slaughter swine for barter or sale to any person." By totally exempting swine from inspection you will be placing the factories which have inspection at a great disadvantage. The larger bacon-factories have their pigs inspected, and the total number under inspection in the North Island for the year ending the 31st March last was 35,780. Out of that number there were 384 totally condemned, there were 1,730 partly condemned, and there were 307 slightly diseased but passed, or a total of about 8 per cent. Now, there are several factories which are not killing under inspection at all. I have not the figures for the year ending the 31st March, 1905, but for the year before the number killed without inspection was 31,819 in both Islands, and the total number condemned out of this 31,819 was eleven. You will notice the difference under inspection this year, 1905, because with inspection, as I have explained, out of a total of 35,780 pigs, 384 were totally condemned, 1,730 partly condemned, and 307 slightly diseased. All condemned pigs were infected with tuberculosis. What I wish particularly to bring before the Committee is the fact that all factories are not brought under inspection. It would be very much better in every way if all factories were brought under inspection. It is a fact that the disease of tuberculosis is more common among pigs than any other animals. Government inspection has proved that the pig is very much more liable to disease than any other animal. That is a very important matter, and I think it would be very much to the benefit of New Zealand if all pigs were killed under inspection. By this Bill it is proposed to totally exempt swine from inspection. A farmer can kill without inspection. By this Bill it is proposed as a remedy that when pigs are slaughtered for sale elsewhere than in an abattoir or a meat-export slaughterhouse the head shall not be removed, and the pluck shall be left adhering to the dressed carcase by the windpipe until the carcase is about to be cut up for retail sale or for curing. It is proposed that all plucks shall be left adhering to the carcase by the windpipe, because that is where tuberculosis generally affects the pig. It generally affects it in the throat, and if it is affected at all it will show there, and of course it will adhere to the windpipe and the lungs; and by making it compulsory to have the pluck and the windpipe adhering to the carcase, an Inspector could walk into any shop where pigs are being sold and inspect the pluck and the windpipe. But, under this subclause as it reads at present, the Inspector might go into a shop and find, when he comes to examine the carcasses, that perhaps there may be only half the plucks left in the pigs, the reason given the Inspector would be that the carcase is about to be cut up. I would propose that the words "about to be cut up" be withdrawn, and the words "actually being cut up" substituted, it being very easy for any one to cut out the plucks of diseased pigs, and if an Inspector calls they might commence to cut up the pigs. There might be twelve pigs to be cut up. A man might say, "I am about to cut up this lot." He might then take the plucks out of the whole lot of them. That is the point I wish to make clear. One carcase at a time should only be cut up, and until it is actually being cut up the pluck and the windpipe should be left adhering to it. If this was the case a man would be very much less likely to send diseased pork on to the market, because he would know that the Inspector could come in and examine the pluck and the windpipe; but if he thought there was a possible chance that the Inspector would not be able to detect the disease he would take the risk. The risk of this detection, as I have explained, would be very much greater if the plucks and the windpipe have to be left adhering to the pigs until the carcase is actually being cut up. I think, gentlemen, it would be very much better if inspection was compulsory in all bacon-factories. Owing to several of the factories coming under inspection the bacon industry has very much expanded, and the number of pigs in the colony has been steadily increasing in the last few years, but we think the industry will never make the progress it should make until all factories are under inspection. If we want this industry to advance it should be brought under inspection. Because pigs are not properly inspected in many cases people do not care to buy bacon, because there is a chance of it being diseased. I think there are only three bacon-factories in New Zealand under inspection—T. H. Green and Co., Christchurch, the North Island Mild-cure Bacon Company, at Woodville, and ourselves. These three bacon-factories have come voluntarily under inspection.

261. What is the name of your firm?—W. Dimock and Co. (Limited). During the year ending the 31st March last we had 153 pigs totally, 971 partly condemned, and 250 slightly diseased but passed, out of a total of 17,879, or an average of 8 per cent. diseased pigs. The total number we killed last year under inspection was 17,879.

262. Where are your works?—Our abattoirs are at Kaiwarra, and our factory is on Waterloo Quay, Wellington.
263. Is all the killing done there?—It is all done at the abattoirs at Kaiwarra.
264. You have no branches?—No, we have no branches.
265. Do you buy dead meat?—Yes, sir, we buy dead meat.
266. That is not inspected?—No.
267. You say there are three companies inspecting as far as you know. You mean bacon-factories?—Yes, bacon-factories.
268. But the other companies that slaughter generally—they slaughter pigs?—All the meat-export companies have inspectors.
269. All the companies in New Zealand have inspectors?—Yes, all export companies.
270. And pigs slaughtered there would be inspected?—Yes.
271. Have you any idea what that number would come to? Would it not be a very large proportion?—That is all included in the 35,780 I have mentioned as inspected in the North Island last year.
272. You said only a limited number were inspected?—I did not mean for export. I was referring to bacon-factories.
273. You were not referring particularly to export companies?—No, sir; I was referring to bacon-factories.
274. But do not the meat-export companies of the colony kill pigs very largely?—No, sir, not largely. Only for their requirements.
275. Do they not kill whatever is sent to them to slaughter from the country districts?—Two-thirds of the total number killed under inspection was killed by ourselves and the North Island Mild-cure Company. The other third was killed by the meat-export companies and abattoirs.
276. What is the name of the company doing business at Woodville?—“The North Island Mild-cure Bacon Company.”
277. Are they inspected?—Yes, sir.
278. Is there no company like that up at Palmerston, or in the dairying district of Taranaki?—There are a number of bacon-factories, but none of them have inspection.
279. *Hon. Mr. T. Kelly.*] Have you seen the total number of pigs slaughtered for sale in New Zealand?—It is about fifty-nine thousand or sixty thousand—say, thirty-five thousand in the North Island and twenty-four thousand in the South Island.
280. And how many of this total are not inspected?—For the year before there were thirty thousand not inspected.
281. That means about ninety thousand a year—sixty thousand inspected and thirty thousand not?—No. We came under inspection for the first time last year, so that the number under inspection was very much larger than formerly. The number for the year before was, roughly, thirty-three thousand under inspection and thirty-one thousand without inspection. That was about the proportion.
282. Then, for the present year there is a larger number under inspection than there was before?—Yes, sir; there is no doubt about that.
283. *Hon. Mr. Duncan.*] With regard to the pluck and the windpipe being left in, does not the Bill stipulate that it has to be left in until it is cut up?—To my idea, if the Bill is allowed to pass as at present worded, it will put temptation in a man's way. Everybody is not built on the same lines, and some men might think that the pig without the pluck would be quite enough to show to the Inspector.
284. Suppose you were to put in the words, “until it was in the process of being cut up”?—“Actually being cut up” I think would be better; but still that might do.
285. Is it dairy-factory pigs that you principally kill?—Yes, sir—that is to say, pigs sent by the milk-suppliers.
286. Your experience of the disease is the same whether they are kept in small quantities or large quantities?—It does not make any difference. In some places where a large number are kept they are very free from disease, and this also applies to some of the smaller places. I think the disease myself is caused principally through their not having sufficient nourishment when they are young. They get it in the milk from the cows. If the milk was sterilised I believe that would to a large extent eradicate disease in pigs.
287. What about the sties?—Unhealthy sties are the cause of a great deal of disease.
288. *Mr. Rhodes.*] You say you had a number of pigs partly condemned. What becomes of these pigs?—They are canned—canned meats.
289. And what becomes of the pigs slightly diseased?—They are canned, after the diseased parts have been taken out.
290. *Hon. Mr. McLean.*] Often the worst-diseased pigs are in the best condition?—Some of the very best-looking pigs are often diseased.
291. Is this tuberculosis very infectious?—Yes, sir.
292. Would you prefer to see public abattoirs in Wellington?—Personally, I am not interested in abattoirs, because we have a private Government Inspector of our own. We should not kill in the abattoirs in any case, because we have a private abattoir of our own.
293. But, supposing there were abattoirs, you would have to kill?—No; under the Bill bacon-factories are exempt. Bacon-factories are exempt under the Bill altogether. We are only killing voluntarily under inspection.
294. Why should pigs be exempt?—I cannot tell you that.
295. They are not where other abattoirs are?—Not for sale as pork; for bacon they are exempt.
296. What is the difference?—I cannot say.
297. *Mr. Lawry.*] Do you know the firm of Green and Co., Christchurch?—Yes, sir.
298. You will have some respect for the opinion of their manager on this question?—Yes, sir.
- Mr. Lawry* (to the Hon. the Chairman): With your permission, sir, I should like to have this letter, which I have received from Messrs. Green and Co., read, and put in the evidence.

[Letter as follows read by the Clerk.]

“DEAR SIR,—

“Christchurch, 29th July, 1905.

“Respecting the Slaughtering and Inspection Bill which has been referred to your Committee, we beg to point out that clause 3 subsection (c) totally exempts swine from the necessity of being killed under Government inspection, and this we consider is a most serious mistake. We pay the whole salary and 10 per cent. for the Government Inspector for our works, and should be placed at a great disadvantage with other firms who do not kill under inspection. We are most strongly of the opinion that all swine sold either as fresh meat or cured as bacon in any abattoir district should be killed under Government inspection, otherwise the inspection can only be a farce. In the event of pigs not being compulsorily inspected, we respectfully suggest that in section 2 after the words ‘by the windpipe,’ the remainder of the clause be struck out and the following inserted: ‘and the carcass must be taken to the office of a Government Inspector and there examined and stamped by him before delivery by the vendor.’ *Re* compensation: In the past we have been allowed at the rate of 5s. per head for pigs weighing under 100 lb., and 10s. for those over that weight. This is very low comparing the price of pork to that of beef and mutton, considering the former is almost twice as much per pound as the latter, although the compensation is calculated at the same price. We would suggest that the compensation for pigs be at the rate of 1½d. per pound, and, as the heads are bought at the same rate as the carcass, we should be allowed compensation for condemned heads at the same rate per pound as for the carcass.

“Yours, &c.,

“H. GREEN AND Co.

“The Chairman, Stock Committee, House of Representatives, Wellington.”

*Mr. Dimock:* There is another point I should like to refer to, and that is with regard to this compensation for condemned meat. Under the 1900 Act compensation is allowed for as follows: “In the case of pigs the compensation shall be (a) for each pig weighing not less than fifty nor more than one hundred pounds dead-weight, five shillings; (b) for each pig weighing more than one hundred pounds dead-weight, ten shillings.” That is to say, we get 5s. for a 50 lb. pig and 10s. for a 100 lb. pig. Under this new Bill this is reduced to ¾d. per pound with the heads off. Well, we have to pay for the heads just at the same rate as for the carcass. And, again, the price of pigs is twice as much as is usually paid for mutton and beef, and yet we are only allowed the same compensation as is the case for condemned mutton or beef. I should like to ask that the amount of compensation in the case of pigs should be increased to 1½d. per pound, and that the heads should be paid for too.

299. *Mr. Laury.*] What is when they are absolutely condemned?—Yes.

300. What is done with those pigs?—They are boiled down. We are paying 4d. per pound. In fact, they cost us nearly 5d. per pound at the present time with railage, commissions, and killing-expenses added.

*Mr. VICTOR DIMOCK* examined. (No. 8.)

301. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Your name?—Victor Dimock.

302. And you wish to give evidence on the same subject?—Yes, sir. I represent Mr. Anderson, of the North Island Mild-cure Bacon Company, at Woodville.

303. Will you make a statement?—Mr. Anderson says he considers it very unfair that bacon-factories, which are operating in the same district as that in which his firm operates, should be allowed to kill diseased pigs and sell them as hams and bacon to the general public, when his company's meat is under inspection. He has to pay the same price to the farmers as these other bacon-factories, and in addition he pays for inspection; and he considers it very unfair that these other bacon-factories should be allowed to sell diseased meat. He considers that your Committee, if they can see their way to do so, should make such amendments in the Bill as would make proper inspection at all bacon-factories compulsory. All pigs killed at bacon-factories should be killed under the supervision of a properly qualified Government Veterinary Surgeon. He feels very strongly upon this point.

304. *Hon. Mr. T. Kelly.*] Who is this gentleman you refer to?—He is the manager of the Woodville Bacon-factory. He had some pigs sent to him from Oroua Bridge by one man, and five out of seven were condemned. He had some words with the man over it, and the man said, “If you do not care to take my pigs I will send them down to Wellington to one of the Wellington butchers,” and he sent them down to one of the Wellington butchers. Mr. Anderson telegraphed to Mr. Reakes to examine these pigs when they arrived, and Mr. Reakes did so, and out of the five pigs sent down he found three were badly infected with tuberculosis. Now, those three pigs would have been sold to the Wellington public as perfectly sound pigs if it had not been for Mr. Reakes going along and inspecting them.

305. Does your company do business in Wellington?—Yes, sir.

306. Anywhere else?—In Taranaki, Nelson, Marlborough, Hawke's Bay.

307. What do you do there?—We have receiving-stations there. We have receiving-stations at Waverley, Mokoia, Hawera, Eltham, Stratford, Kaponga, Otakeho, and Opunake. These pigs are brought alive to Wellington and killed at our abattoirs.

308. Where are they killed?—At our Kaiwarra slaughterhouses.

309. They are all inspected?—Yes; we have a Government Veterinary Surgeon.

310. And you know of no other factory except your own and the Woodville one which has inspection?—Those are the only two in the North Island. The other bacon-factories have no inspection, and they send away their hams and bacon whether diseased or not.

311. Are you quite sure of that?—I am quite certain of it.

*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; printing (1,450 copies), £8 0s. 6d.

*Price 6d.*]

