

The following portion of Mr. Hall's speech was not read, but was handed to the reporter with the request that it be inserted in parentheses at the end of the verbatim report of his remarks:—

There appear to be only two methods which are likely to bring about a material improvement in the present methods, and they are (1) voluntary organization on the part of the farmers, and (2) the enactment and enforcement of corrective legislation both here and in the Mother-country. To most of us, I think, it would be preferable if it could be arranged that the method of combination amongst the farmers should be adopted, and I cannot think that if the farmers were approached in a proper manner they would fail to respond to such a suggestion, and to bear the very trifling cost of providing funds for the purpose of insuring reasonable protection of their interests. It is well that they should know that their wishes are, if not indeed law, entitled to very considerable respect, provided that they are brought before the persons with whom they are dealing in such a manner as to satisfy the latter that if they are not prepared to accede to a reasonable proposition on the part of the farmers, the latter are strong enough and businesslike enough to take the matter into their own hands and make such arrangements as will result in their obtaining elsewhere what they want. If, however, it is the fact that they are so widely scattered as to preclude their combining for the purpose of asserting their rights, then it is only reasonable to ask that the assistance of the Government should be invoked for the purpose of protecting their interests. It does appear to be an eminently reasonable and businesslike proposition to ask that the farmers should submit to a levy on their meat shipped sufficient to provide the expenses of supervision, survey, and inspection, when they can by so doing effect a saving of £37,600 for one year. This, it must be remembered, is only the direct saving effected in the annual premiums paid, but, in addition to this, allowance must be made for the depreciation in prices which is caused by London buyers being able, by reason of successful claims for damage, to place meat in respect of which such claims have been paid on the London market at a very much lower price than could be the case if full prices had to be paid for such meat. It is, of course, impossible to accurately estimate the difference to the producer which is caused by an operation of this kind, but in the opinion of most people connected with the trade it is far in excess of the amount lost in connection with the premiums. Devices and tricks of this kind perhaps come naturally to the persons engaged in this class of business in London, and it is due perhaps to such proceedings that the persons adopting such methods have been described as thieves and wolves, whereas the poor farmer is their prey. This, to my mind, however, is hardly an accurate description, and it would more appropriately state the case if the tradesmen in London were, according to their lights, described as astute business men, and the farmers here were rated as incompetent and unbusinesslike.

*Mr. J. D. Hall.*—I therefore beg to move formally the adoption of remit No. 12.

*Mr. G. Jameson* (Canterbury Agricultural and Pastoral Association).—I beg to second that.

*Mr. A. Borthwick.*—Mr. Chairman, Mr. Hall read his remarks so quickly that it was very difficult to follow them, and consequently it would be difficult to pick out any particular points to reply to.

*Mr. J. C. N. Grigg.*—I think the best plan will be to consider them when printed in the report. I propose to submit remit No. 12 to the committee.

*Sir George Clifford.*—I do not think Mr. Hall's remarks as typed and handed to the reporter should be printed when not read. As a matter of fact, I heard only one sentence, that there was no inspection of the ships' holds; and if everything else is so remarkable and astonishing as that I think it would be undesirable to print the remarks; certainly they would not represent the views of the Conference.

*The Chairman.*—I second Mr. Grigg's motion. I think it would be desirable that remit No. 12 should be a recommendation to the committee.

Carried.

*Mr. Hall* (to Sir George Clifford).—I said, inspection by efficient and recognized authorities.

*Sir George Clifford.*—Well, the inspection is by an efficient and recognized authority.

*Mr. Hall.*—I think that is a matter of opinion, Sir George.

*The Chairman.*—I have now to announce that the ballot for the South Island representatives on the committee has resulted as follows: Messrs. D. D. Macfarlane, J. D. Hall, J. Talbot, A. H. Turnbull, R. Evans, and F. Waymouth. The six gentlemen nominated for the North Island—viz., Messrs. J. G. Wilson, N. Kettle, J. A. Macfarlane, J. Reynolds, A. H. Russell, and Isaac Gray—are declared elected, making up the twelve members of the committee.

*Mr. C. W. Reid* (Canterbury Agricultural and Pastoral Association).—I now move remit No. 13, "That it be a recommendation to the freezing companies to use stronger covers." We get many complaints about torn covers and consequent discoloration of the meat. I have heard reports of stronger covers being used at Home with very satisfactory results, and I hope the freezing companies will not think we are interfering with matters that do not concern us when we make this suggestion to them.

*Mr. J. D. Hall.*—I have to second that motion. One instance of using stronger covers has been furnished by a shipment of prime lambs on exhibit at a particular show, and the comments on those covers were very eulogistic. I think it would be desirable for the committee to go into the matter for the purpose of telling the farmers whether the covers are worth the extra money.

*Mr. W. Murray* (Christchurch Meat Company).—I might say in connection with Mr. Reid's remarks that some years ago I obtained some thousands of stronger covers. These were sent Home to see whether any good results could be attained. Curiously enough, this particular consignment sold at a fraction less than a shipment of corresponding quality sent with fair average covers; but that was merely the luck of the market perhaps. This is a matter that has been very fully considered by all the companies, I understand—certainly by my own. Some two years ago, in