

*The Chairman:* I think you do not understand the drift of Sir John Hall's question. It was to this effect: It would be of no great advantage to have the cartridges manufactured here when the powder had to be imported, if you could import the cartridges in the same way.

*Hon. Sir J. Hall:* I mean as a matter of military precaution.

36. *The Chairman.*] Is there any reason why there should be any difficulty in importing cartridges in large quantities, and keeping them in stock, in the same way as you do the powder?—I do not know; we can always get powder, but we cannot always get cartridges.

37. *Hon. Sir J. Hall.*] In the event of a war, supposing your stock of powder had run out, you would have to wait for a supply from the Old Country?—That is so, certainly.

38. You would be in the same fix?—Yes; of course, there is that difficulty.

39. *The Chairman.*] Are we to understand that you cannot make sure of getting your stock of cartridges?—We always have to look ahead, and keep the supply of cartridges up.

40. Does that condition not also apply to powder?—Yes.

41. *Mr. Tanner.*] Can powder be more easily procured in the Old Country in time of peace or war than ready-made cartridges?—Well, I think it all depends on what kind of powder you want. There is no doubt Snider could, and probably Martini-Henry too.

42. In the case of a war scare, is it not a fact that the English Government have occasionally given orders in the United States for cartridges, and did they not do so seven years ago?—Yes.

43. Would it not be practically impossible for us to get ready-made cartridges under those circumstances? If we had to order them from the United States, surely they would not be in a position to supply us?—I should say they would not. I know that was a fact.

44. It created a great deal of feeling at the time?—Yes. I may mention that we had some cartridges sent from America not long ago. A traveller was here and sent us some, and they were perfect rubbish. We could not use them.

45. *The Chairman.*] In one of your answers to Sir John Hall you said there was a risk of getting inferior cartridges?—Yes.

*Hon. Sir J. Hall:* I did not understand from the witness that it would be an inferior article.

46. *Mr. Duncan.*] What is the relative value of the powder-supply as compared with the supply of cartridges?—I could not tell you that.

47. *Mr. Lawry.*] I suppose you have been well satisfied that you have been as well and as cheaply served by the Colonial Ammunition Company as you have been by any English firm?—Yes. If I had any choice I would rather use Ely's.

48. But Ely's would cost you quite as much as Whitney's?—Yes. If Captain Whitney's cartridges can be got at English prices there is no fault to find with them.

49. *Hon. Sir J. Hall.*] What is his price compared with the English price?—His last offer is to give us the cartridges at the English prices.

WEDNESDAY, 3RD AUGUST, 1892.

Mr. T. THOMPSON, M.H.R., examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] I understand that you desire to give some evidence before this Committee?—Yes; I was requested to give evidence as to what I know of the Colonial Ammunition Company's Factory at Mount Eden, Auckland. I know that the company have expended a very considerable amount of money in the erection of this factory, and that, as far as I am able to judge, they possess a very complete plant, and employ a considerable number of hands. When I last visited the factory there were over sixty hands employed, or not more than one-half the usual number when they are in full work. I cannot give the exact date of that visit, but it was within the last three months. Captain Whitney complains that sufficient encouragement has not been offered by the Government to this industry, and is anxious that some concession should be granted. He does not wish the Government to pay more for his ammunition than they would pay in the regular way for the imported article. I know the benefit the district would derive from the factory if kept in full work. There is a strong feeling of disappointment in the neighbourhood at the prospect of the works being closed. There is an average of one hundred persons employed living in the neighbourhood of the factory. They are chiefly women and young persons of both sexes. This number is exclusive of experts. As Captain Whitney has given evidence fully before the Committee, that is all I need say on the matter.

2. *Mr. Duncan.*] Has Captain Whitney produced any Martini-Henry ammunition in Auckland?—He has supplied some but not from the Auckland factory; he brought it from his factory in Australia. He is, however, prepared to furnish it from the Auckland factory. While I am here I should be glad to give some information with respect to other industries.

3. *Hon. Sir J. Hall.*] Does Captain Whitney manufacture for the Government only, or does he supply private individuals?—He supplies the trade with ammunition for sporting purposes.

4. *Mr. E. M. Smith.*] Are you aware of what the Premier promised Captain Whitney?—I cannot say. I was present when he interviewed the Minister of Defence, but since then there have been several interviews, and I do not know what transpired.

5. *The Chairman.*] What are the other industries respecting which you desire to give evidence?—I wish to say something with regard to the corrugated-iron and timber trades. Mr. Samuel Parker, of Auckland, is carrying on the galvanising and corrugating of sheet-iron at Auckland, and he has been interviewing the Premier with the view of obtaining assistance by way of an import duty on galvanised corrugated iron. It is an industry which gives employment to a great many people at Auckland. A large number of people are employed in the factory in corrugating iron, and they use the black sheets from the Onehunga ironworks, which are galvanised and corrugated at the factory. For the purpose of carrying it through this process many old people and young persons earn money by collecting scrap zinc which is used in the process. Mr. S. Parker is the