

128. *Mr. Hutchison.*] As to sheep-dip, we were told in another place, by the farmers, that none of the colonial dips could be compared with the imported: is that the opinion of this deputation?

Mr. Anstey: We have distinctly stated otherwise. I have used colonial dip for years, and have ordered more.

129. Then, in your opinion, those farmers who take the imported, and have signed petitions got up by the importers, have made a mistake?—It must be prejudice on their part.

130. *Mr. McGowan.*] It has been stated that New Zealand flour is sold £1 per ton cheaper in Australia than here. I believe so myself. I presume this is caused by the export of what the millers would term "surplus stocks." Would not this exportation of flour reduce the price of wheat here?—No. The price of wheat is regulated by the English market.

131. Are you in favour of a duty upon imported flour?—I do not think the question affects us as farmers.

132. Well, what is your opinion with regard to a duty being placed on foreign wheat?—That is exactly the same thing. Sometimes it might benefit a few farmers or a few millers, but it would not benefit the general body of the farmers, as we can grow wheat as cheaply as any of the other colonies.

133. *Mr. Stevens.*] Are you aware that at the present time Australian flour is being imported into New Zealand, and is being sold, under the price of New Zealand flour?—It is not done in Canterbury.

Mr. Inglis: It is only done under exceptional circumstances in regard to freight.

134. *Mr. Stevens.*] You think it could not be done regularly?—No.

135. Do you find the New Zealand coal equal in quality to the imported coal?

Mr. Talbot: I prefer the local coal for machinery purposes.

136. *Mr. Stevens.*] I understand you object to a duty being placed on New South Wales coal imported here, *Mr. Anstey?*—Yes.

137. If you think the New Zealand coal is superior to the New South Wales coal, why should a duty affect you?

Mr. Talbot: The price of the local coal would be raised immediately.

138. *Mr. Stevens.*] What coal is mostly in demand here?—Newcastle coal.

139. If an import duty were placed on sheep-dip, do you think it would have the effect of raising the price of dip?—I cannot say.

140. *The Chairman.*] I think there are some articles you were going to mention upon which, in your opinion, a duty might be imposed?

Mr. Anstey: Seeing that the average duty on the articles we wish exempted is 20 per cent., it struck me that we would have to make up the loss somewhere, and I would suggest that the following goods could very well bear an extra rate of duty: Drugs, carpets, mats, cartridges, firearms, drawings, picture-frames, looking-glasses, pipes, cigarette-holders. These articles are simply luxuries, and could bear a higher duty, seeing that nearly every necessary we use is charged 20 per cent. Millinery, gold- and silver-plate, jewellery, precious stones, fancy goods, and toys are only charged the same amount of duty that is charged upon the necessities of life, and I think nobody will contend that they are not luxuries. I think these articles, at present charged 20 per cent., could very well bear a large increase, to make up for the duties we ask you to remove.

141. *Mr. Tanner.*] Of course, you have made no calculation as to the amount of revenue that would be produced if these duties were raised to 50 per cent.?—No.

142. Do you think, if these articles were made to bear duties three times as much as the present duties, there would be a penny more brought into the revenue?—That is not a question for me to answer.

143. *The Chairman.*] Are there any other matters?—We ask for the duty to be removed from fencing-wire, and we think that the duties on many articles—fireworks and matches, for instance—might be raised. Speaking generally, the poorer a man is the greater the amount of taxation that he pays. For instance, tea pays a duty of 100 per cent. or 25 per cent., according to its value; tea in bond of the value of 6d. pays a duty of 100 per cent.

Mr. Talbot: We would ask the Commission, in framing the tariff, to consider a suggestion we wish to offer that some representative of the agricultural interest should be called in to assist in the matter.

144. *The Chairman.*] That is a suggestion that another Commissioner should be appointed?—No; but that the farming interest should be represented in the adjustment of the tariff.

INVERCARGILL.

WEDNESDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY, 1895.

(15.) JAMES BROKENSHAW examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A fishmonger, in partnership with another.

2. Have you had much experience in the trade?—All my life; catching and selling fish, and oystering.

3. What do you want to bring before the Commission?—I wish to see a duty put on imported tinned oysters.

4. There is a duty?—Yes, but it is not sufficient to allow us to compete with the American oysters. They can land them here for about 4½d. a tin, duty-paid, and the Stewart Island industry