

from the sheep's back and make it up into garments. Therefore they have, by their natural position, an advantage as far as we are concerned; and it is my intention to bring before you garments made in the South that we in the North are unable to compete with. In order to show you the low prices of Kaiapoi clothing sold in Auckland, I have here a pair of trousers sold there by the Kaiapoi Woollen Factory at 4s. 11d.; that is the wholesale price. The garments are sold to the Queen Street people at that price. Now, we have to compete against that, but the argument of the southern people is that we have our representatives down South and we sell our goods there. They compete against us in the North, and, if we are to have a system of protection throughout the colony, let us have protection for Auckland. [Witness produces a suit of clothing.] This is sold in Auckland at 19s. 6d. Now we are asked to adopt a general system of manufacture. At the same time we should like to know how these garments are produced. There must be "sweating" somewhere—either the wool-producer, the weaver, or the workers at some other stage of manufacture. Mr. Archibald Clarke wished me to state that there was little difference in the prices they paid in their own factory and the price they could get the clothing made for in the South. In order to strengthen my argument in reference to the position of the workers, I say that, although we may turn out our clothing at a little less cost, at the same time the workers do not suffer. I explained to the employés that there was a movement on foot down South to compel them to work under the same method—under the same log and conditions as they worked under in the South—and they strongly objected. I have here a statement to the following effect: "We, the undersigned factory-employés of Archibald Clarke and Sons and G. H. Powley, do hereby heartily approve of the agreement that has been entered into between the Auckland manufacturers and the Tailoresses' Union." This statement is signed by about a hundred and twenty girls in our factory, and a similar number in Messrs. Clarke's factory. They were told that in signing there was no compulsion whatever, and that they signed of their own accord and freewill. This shows there has been perfect unanimity so far as employers and employed are concerned in Auckland. Again, to further show that there is this perfect unanimity, I wish to place before you this voluntary statement made by one of the workers in Mr. Powley's factory—namely, "that, having been employed for eight years in the tailoring trade in Dunedin, I affirm that the amount of wages earned per week in this factory is equal to the wages earned by those similarly employed in Dunedin; and I also affirm that the workers in this factory are not compelled to work as hard as those employed in the factories in Dunedin." [Witness then read other statements similar to foregoing.] These are all signed by the workers themselves, who were perfectly willing and ready to sign. There was no pressure used, the "pressers" simply being sent round to ask the girls if they would sign.

6. *Captain Russell.*] Those statements are signed by the coatmakers employed in Powley's factory?—Yes. Now, in looking over the report of the Labour Department it will be found, as regards the wages in Auckland compared with the wages in Dunedin, that on page 66 the average wages of the piece-workers in Dunedin are from 6s. 6d. to 21s. 10d., while on page 48 the wages in Auckland are stated as from 8s. 1d. to 30s. I maintain there is no sweating about that. [Witness here explained the details of the process of manufacture in the clothing trade.] With regard to clause 87, paragraph 2, I am of opinion that the time should be extended to one month. It certainly is too short notice, as most of the mail-carriage has to be done by boat.

7. *Mr. Arnold.*] It says, at least seven days; it does not limit the time to seven days?—I might also point out in regard to manufacture, that coat-making pays much better than any other department in the tailoring trade. The result is that almost every girl who applies for work wishes to be taken on as a coat-maker, which has the tendency of increasing the number of workers beyond what is actually required, and that again has the effect of lowering the individual wages of the workers.

8. *Mr. Lewis.*] Would it suit you if an award were made under which the weekly earnings of the employés should be uniform?—Yes, it would suit our case, and would be perfectly fair to the workers.

9. You are of opinion that all workers should be paid wages which would be equal throughout the colony?—Yes, certainly; but, as Mr. Hercus stated, the southern factories worked under a method which is twenty-six years behind the Auckland method. We object to have the clothing trade of Auckland forced back twenty-six years. It is a bad policy, surely, to force an industry backward. The natural tendency is for it to go forward.

10. *Mr. Arnold.*] Would a weekly wage system altogether suit you?—There is a difficulty in this way: that if you have a large number of employés—say, two or three hundred—you have to add extra supervision to your expenses. And when they know that they will receive a weekly wage, they do not always endeavour to do their best; they sometimes endeavour to do their worst. I question very much whether it would be advisable to say no piece-work should be done.

11. *Mr. Bollard.*] I understand that your contention is this: that in Auckland, under certain conditions of working and improved methods, you wish for piece-work. You pay as much for wages as is paid in any other part of the colony?—Yes. The following is a statement of the average earnings of five coat-makers taken for thirteen consecutive weeks: 7th April—£1 3s. 5d., £1 3s. 9d., £1 2s. 1d., 17s., £1 4s. 4d.; 14th April—£1 1s. 7d., £1 1s. 8d., £1 4s. 6d., £1 0s. 4d., £1; 21st April (Easter)—11s. 8d., 16s. 6d., 17s. 8d., away, 15s. 5d.; 28th April—£1 2s. 10d., 14s. 3d., 16s. 8d., £1 5s. 4d., £1 1s. 10d.; 5th May—£1 3s. 2d., £1 3s. 9d., £1 0s. 2d., 18s. 10d., £1 5s. 1d.; 12th May—£1 3s. 0d., away ill, 17s. 7d., 17s. 10d., £1 4s. 8d.; 19th May—£1 5s. 11d., £1 13s. 3d., £1 2s. 1d., 17s. 8d., £1 2s. 5d.; 26th May—£1 4s. 9d., £1 1s. 6d., £1 1s. 3d., £1 1s. 4d., £1 3s. 5d.; 2nd June—£1 0s. 6d., £1 2s. 2d., 17s. 4d., 17s. 3d., £1 2s. 9d.; 9th June—£1 4s. 1d., £1 2s. 2d., £1 1s., 19s. 2d., £1 4s. 6d.; 16th June—£1 6s., £1 4s. 8d., £1 2s. 4d., 17s. 8d., £1 1s. 8d.; 23rd June—£1 1s., £1 2s., £1 1s. 1d., away, £1 6s. 11d.; 30th June—£1 5s., £1 3s. 7d., 18s. 1d., £1 8s., £1 1s. 6d.: totals—£14 12s. 11d. for thirteen weeks, average £1 2s. 6½d.; £13 9s. 3d. for