

on these imported goods?—There is no doubt about that. The workers cannot buy the finer class of goods, and the result is that they must use the cheaper kind, which are more stylish and will last them during a season and enable them to follow the fashion of the time.

11. It is not an advantage to buy an article that lasts too long, because it goes out of fashion?—From the ladies' point of view, that is so.

12. In your opinion, it would be a hardship to the poorer class of the community if the duty were increased on imported goods?—Yes.

13. *Mr. Wüheford.*] Was the Auckland *Star* report of the clothiers' meeting in Auckland a correct one?—No; there were a few errors in it, and I asked the *Star* representative if he could correct them, and he said they could not.

14. But was that report correct?—No. It was fairly correct. There was nothing in it that was a gross error.

15. Was it correct in stating that there were only 900 hands at work in the woollen-factories in New Zealand?—No. At the time I thought that was a misprint.

16. Then, why did you print that report and send it round to all the members of the House if it were not correct?—It was merely a report of the meeting that I wanted to send round to members of the House. I knew that a mere alteration of the figures could be made afterwards.

17. Would it not have been better to alter the figures in the first instance?—Yes, but the paper-proprietors could not do it. The report was linotyped and could not be altered.

18. And you thought you were justified in having an incorrect report reprinted and sent round to members of Parliament?—I should say they were only printers' errors.

19. Was it correct in stating that the effect of the increased tax on woollens would be to throw 1,400 workers out of employment?—I believe it was fairly correct, but we had no idea of the number of hands that might be thrown out of employment.

20. Suppose you add 1s. to the 22 per cent. duty, would that extra duty cause thousands of people to be thrown out of employment?—Of course, an extra shilling would not throw hands out of work, but when you take the percentage on the sale of the goods and raise the 22 per cent. you decrease the purchasing-power of the people. You increase it nearly 50 per cent. to the purchaser, and therefore reduce the purchasing-power.

21. What would be the lowest-priced shoddy suit turned out at a fair wholesale price?—Somewhere about 16s.

22. And what would be the price if you used the cheapest class of all-wool New-Zealand-made—the price per suit?—You are asking me something outside of my branch of the trade, because I do not know exactly the value of the goods I make up. I should say somewhere about the same price—16s. 6d. or 17s.

23. Do you consider that a duty of, say, 5s. 6d. per suit—compelling them to buy a suit of all wool rather than shoddy—would be disastrous to the working-men of New Zealand and prevent them getting clothes?—I do not think the report puts it in that way. It means the cost would be so much increased that the people would have to buy less of them.

24. And your opinion is that it would throw the tailoresses out of work if the duty were increased?—Yes, a very large number of them.

25. If 25 per cent. duty were charged upon the imported shoddy goods would that throw all those 1,400 workers out of employment?—I do not say that stuff worth 1s. a yard would make a suit worth 15s.

26. You say that if there were an increase of duty it would throw all those tailoresses out of work: would 2 per cent. do that?—It would throw some of them out.

27. How do the tailoresses justify protection being given to their labour as against that of the young women employed in the woollen-mills?—I am a Free-trader right through, and am not here to talk protection for our trade or the woollen-mills. I cannot justify that.

28. In your opinion, to maintain woollen-manufacture in New Zealand should the tariff go up or wages come down?—I think the cost of living should come down. I do not believe in reducing wages.

29. What we are considering is how best to foster the manufactures of New Zealand, and I want your opinion as to whether the tariff should go up or wages come down in order that we may maintain our industries?—I say the cost of living should come down by reducing the duty on other commodities not made in the colony.

30. *Mr. Bollard.*] The woollen-manufacturers of the colony have asked that an increased duty should be put upon inferior imported goods known as "shoddy." At the same time they say that the public would have to pay no more for their clothing than they do now, and that as a matter of fact they are cheated by the clothiers, who palm off inferior goods on people who have not the experience to protect themselves. They also say that they could supply an article that would give greater satisfaction to the poorer classes than they get now. What have you to say to that?—Then, why do they want more protection? If the price of clothing would not go up with an increased duty why do they want more protection? My reply is that the statement is erroneous.

31. *Mr. Hardy.*] You speak of the protection given to the woollen-mills as being high?—Yes.

32. How much, then, is the protection to those who manufacture clothing?—25 per cent. *ad valorem*.

33. What is the proportion of imported articles which come in for manufacturing purposes in comparison with what is made up in the colony?—The amount of woollens imported is four hundred thousand pounds' worth, and the amount of goods manufactured is £359,000.

34. If the one is brought in at 22 per cent., how much more, then, according to your tables, is the protection you are now speaking about?—That is about 5 per cent. It costs as much to protect our clothing-manufactures *pro rata*.

35. Consequently there is not much value in the evidence given on behalf of the woollen-mills when those you are representing get a bit more?—I do not say that. If you are going to increase