

the minds of the Committee was that four hundred thousand pounds' worth was the total amount of woollen goods imported, whereas you now qualify it by putting in piece-goods. I find, in addition, by the statistics that there were 566,000 pounds' worth of slop goods and made-up goods imported?—I thought you referred to woollen goods.

98. Are not slop goods similar to many woollen goods imported?—Yes.

99. Would it not have been right, then, to have said the total was £1,000,000?—Certainly not, because I should have had to combine the whole woollen and clothing trades together.

100. Are not the imported goods made up of woollen goods?—Yes.

101. Is it right, then, to say there were four hundred thousand pounds' worth when there was imported in addition to that 536,000 pounds' worth?—No, because you would have to take off the cost of making the suits up.

102. That may be, but that is the value of the imported made-up woollen stuffs?—Yes.

103. Coming to blankets, you say the mills here are already making a blanket to suit this market?—Yes.

104. Do you know from the statistics that the importation of blankets has increased—that in 1894 17,000 pairs were imported, and that there has been an increase by over 2,000 this year?—This year it is only £8,504.

105. There were 19,867 pairs. You say that there are 1,600 people employed in the woollen-mills, and that some 1,400 hands would be thrown out of employment in the clothing-factories if the duty were increased on imported piece-goods?—Yes.

106. Can you tell me what the proportion is, or is likely to be, of those 2,500 who are employed in making up imported piece-goods?—There are 850 in the wholesale and 1,622 in the retail.

107. Can you tell me anything about the relative merits of imported tweed at 2s. 6d. as against the manufactured tweed in this colony?—No; I am not a purchaser.

108. Would an imported suit made up at 16s. be nearly so good in value as a colonial made-up suit at £1 1s.?—It would wear as well.

109. Would it be as warm and comfortable?—Yes.

110. Do you think the wages of the working-men—I refer to the farming class as well as to town people—are so low that they cannot afford to pay £1 16s. for a colonially manufactured woollen suit?—I should say there is a large number of people who cannot afford to pay that price, as there is now a large demand for suits at a lower price.

111. As a matter of fact, I gathered from your evidence that a number of people buy poor stuff because they wish to obtain a change yearly in the style of goods?—Yes.

112. You are a Free-trader, but I take it that you would not advocate the duty of 25 per cent. being taken off manufactured goods brought into the colony?—I do not advocate taking the duty off in one industry at a time. If the duty is to be taken off it ought to be gradually taken off all goods.

113. Would you be willing to do that?—Yes, certainly.

114. Is it not a fact that a great many people at Home are imitating New Zealand tweeds?—Yes.

115. And others mark on imported tweeds goods "Colonial-made"?—No.

116. That is not within your experience?—No.

117. *Mr. Barber.*] You said you are a Free-trader and are favourable to the taking-off of the duties provided they are taken off all goods?—Yes.

118. You say there will be 1,400 people thrown out of employment if we put an extra duty on the imported goods?—Yes.

119. Supposing we took the duty off, should we be able to employ those 1,400 people in the colony?—Yes; there would be other sources of employment opened.

120. Labour costs so much less in the Home-country that goods can be landed here much cheaper than they can be made here: would not that cheap labour compete successfully with the labour in this colony?—Not necessarily; the wages paid in the different countries will adjust that. If we send goods Home it is only in exchange for other commodities. The tailoresses might have to change their occupation—many might become housekeepers, for instance, which would be better for them.

121. In manufacturing, say, a pair of trousers out of imported tweed and a pair of trousers out of colonial tweed, which gives the best value?—They almost balance—they are very close together.

122. Why do the manufacturers who make up imported goods put a ticket on them, as a rule, to show that they are locally manufactured if there is no advantage?—I think the words "Local manufacture" mean "made in the colony." If I make up goods in the colony I think I am entitled to put the words on the ticket "Made in the colony."

123. But is that not deceiving the public?—No; the garment is made in the colony.

124. If a man saw a suit of clothes the ticket on which stated "Warranted of colonial manufacture," where would he anticipate that was made?—I do not know what he would think about it. I should say the suit was made in the colony.

125. There is a ticket here [Produced] with those words on it: would that imply that it is made in the colony?—I should say it is a garment-ticket, which proves that it is made in the colony.

126. Would it not be likely to mislead a person who thought he was buying an article of colonial manufacture?—I will admit it is likely to deceive.

127. Must there not be some advantage in connection with colonial tweed to induce people to put a ticket like that on shoddy?—No; it is because garments from Home do not fit or suit colonial people. All makes of garments have a ticket on them like that.

128. You inferred that if an increased duty were put on the imported article, the spending-power of the workers being limited, they could not purchase so many clothes as they do at the present time?—Yes.