

it compare with a suit made of imported cloth and put together here and sold at the same price? Which of those two suits would be the better value to a farmer in the country for hard wear?—That is a question that can hardly be answered.

187. You cannot tell me?—If he wanted to go out and start ploughing in it, of course the New Zealand suit would be the better.

188. I say let him start wearing the suit on Sundays?—He would not want a rough suit for Sunday wear. Men want the blue cloths, and many of these young fellows will not have the rough tweeds.

189. I want to get at the relative value to the farmer of a suit of clothes which will cost £2, of New Zealand tweed, as against a similar suit of imported tweed?—I do not think there are many tweeds imported that would make up a £2 suit. That New Zealand tweed at 1s. 4d. a yard is as good an article as you could get in the world for the money.

190. Let us take a thirty-shilling suit made of New Zealand material as against a suit costing 30s. of Home-manufactured tweed: which is the better?—They would be just about the same thing. When you go into the lower articles the competition comes in in these blue cloths.

191. There are lots of stuffs which are imported from Home and are mixed with cotton, and when a boy puts a suit of it on once or twice the stuff washes right through?—All I can say is that we do not keep such stuff in Auckland. We do sell a very small quantity of low-class tweed.

191A. What is the lowest-priced suit that is made of colonial cloth?—Somewhere about 18s. We do not make up these lowest-priced men's suits of imported tweeds at all. We make them up of colonial tweeds, but when we come to the blue cloths we make up the vicuna.

192. You are really making up all your lowest-priced tweed suits from colonial material now?—Yes, all men's suits.

193. You use more of the other material for boys' suits?—Yes; for little boys' cheap knickerbockers or cheap suits.

194. *Mr. Hardy.*] Colonial tweed, you say, can be bought at 1s. 4d. per yard: is that the mill price?—Yes.

195. You spoke of twenty-five-shilling suits: is that the retail price?—Yes; the wholesale price is 18s.

196. Your contention is that we cannot compete with that class of stuff?—You cannot make that article. People want that article and you cannot make it.

197. But an ordinary farmer who wants a cheap suit of clothes has no difficulty in getting accommodated, because you cannot compete with colonial tweed?—No, we do not attempt it until we get down to the very cheap stuff.

198. And the Wellington trousers I was asking Mr. King about, I suppose you know something about those?—We have some very cheap trousers.

199. What priced trousers would that make up into [Sample produced]?—That is Onehunga tweed and sells at about 4s. 6d. wholesale.

200. And these take the place very largely of moleskins?—Yes; moleskins are dead. The only things used very largely by the working-classes are denim goods. The majority of the workers use these for working in, and want blue suits for Sundays and holidays.

201. Is there any shoddy in the Onehunga tweed?—No.

202. What is it made up of?—All pure New Zealand wool.

203. Is it of presentable appearance?—Yes, it is fair.

204. Will it wear well?—It will wear strongly.

205. And it will be useful as an article of clothing?—We are not brought into competition with that. We are making it up.

206. *Mr. Laurenson.*] There was a suit that Mr. Hardy asked you a question about and which you said was retailed at £1 5s., while the wholesale price was 18s.?—Yes.

207. What do you pay for getting a suit of that description made up?—I think it costs us something like 10s. 6d., speaking from memory—somewhere from 9s. to 10s. 6d.

208. *Mr. Rutherford.*] You stated that trousers were made up from a certain class of tweed at from 4s. 11d. to 5s. 6d. wholesale?—We pay the log price whatever it is for those—from 1s. 9d. to 2s. In connection with those colonial goods, there is very little made out of them, because there is so much competition.

*ARTHUR ROSSER examined. (No. 7.)

209. *The Chairman.*] What is your name?—Arthur Rosser. I have been authorised to appear as a delegate from the Auckland Trades and Labour Council before the Committee appointed to take evidence on the question of a proposed increase of duty on shoddy goods.

210. Would you like to make a statement, or would you prefer to answer questions that may be put to you?—I would like to make a brief statement, because part of what has been allotted to me to say on this question has already been covered by Mr. King. I may say that I am president of the Auckland Tailoresses' Union, and secretary of eight other unions. I am a carpenter by trade, and therefore am not directly interested in connection with textile fabrics. The matter came before the Auckland Trades and Labour Council, and was discussed at one of our meetings, and referred to the Auckland Tailors' Union, which is affiliated to the Trades Council, with a request that they would report on it, as it interested members of that union more than any other. A fortnight afterwards their report was brought up, and was to the effect that their union was totally opposed to any proposed increase in the duty on so-called shoddy goods. Of course, the question of shoddy goods has already been brought up here, and, although it covered in the first place a very common and undesirable article probably, we now consider that it could be made to include some of the fabrics that are very much in use by people in our northern climate. In this matter we have the question of climate to consider, and however desirable it may be that all-wool articles should be worn in the southern part of the colony, we in