

72 Would it not improve all that material if it were branded, and it were generally known it had kept its colour for ten years?—If we had to take ten years to find out an item like that, we might be over the bridge.

73. Is it not a fact that New Zealand turns out a tremendous amount of shoddy stuff in order to meet shoddy manufactured stuff that is imported?—It would not pay New Zealand manufacturers to manufacture it.

74. Would you not manufacture shoddy stuff to sell to firemen and others?—No.

75. Is it not split?—Yes, but the soles are of solid leather, and I could show you split that would wear equal to the best tanned grade kip.

76. That is well loaded?—Yes.

77 *Mr Luke.*] Is Dominion-tanned leather largely in use in boot-factories?—Yes.

78. Not exclusively?—No.

79. Does it compare favourably with the imported leather?—Yes.

80. There is an impression abroad that Dominion-tanned leather is not given sufficient time in the seasoning?—Of course, that depends to a great extent on the time it is given in the pits.

81 Taken as a whole there is no market for Dominion leather?—There is very little leather exported now

82. Are boots never stamped showing whether they are imported from Germany, America, or Britain?—No there is only a declaration on the invoice.

83. As a matter of fact, it is not compulsory to stamp?—No.

84. Do you not think it would be wise of our Legislature to first of all bring about the stamping of the imported article before interfering with the system we have in this Dominion at the present time?—Might I be permitted to ask a question. What is the idea of wishing the colonial article to be branded? This is a general question.

85. *Mr Hardy*] Like prime Canterbury When you make a name for anything I think you can afford to brand it. When you have ideals and live up to them, you can live by them?—If you wish to increase the demand for colonial-manufactured goods, we cannot give them to you.

86. *Mr Luke.*] You have no desire for any brand or system at all?—No.

87 You have had a very large experience as a business man, so I will ask you if you find a similar prejudice against other of the Dominion's manufactures than in the boot trade?—I cannot say, in fact, I have not sufficient knowledge.

88. You say suitable labour is not available?—I have a demand to-day for from 1,500 to 2,000 pairs of boots per week more than I am able to turn out.

89 Is that brought about by a lack of desire on the part of our young people to learn that particular trade as against other trades?—I have been endeavouring to solve that mystery for a long time, but up to the present I have not been able to do so.

90. As far as wages are concerned, you do not think there is any disability; the trade is attractive enough?—Yes, and the hours are certainly not prohibitive.

91 Is piecework being worked now?—No; day-wages.

92 You said in answer to *Mr Hardy* that the greater proportion of imports from America had ceased largely since the preferential tariff?—Yes.

93. *Mr Fraser*] You said something about a limited number of apprentices: do you attribute the limitation in number to the scarcity of trained hands?—Decidedly At one time we were making labour ourselves.

94. Is that being done now?—No, we do not do it.

95. Is that the rule throughout the Dominion?—I think it is general.

96. If that is to be the case, what is to be the future of the boot trade—that is, when the present workmen die out?—We shall have to depend on imported labour

97. I understand you to say that you cannot obtain, although you desire to do so, sufficient suitable labour for your business?—No. For the first time for a long period I had a telegram on Saturday last from two benchmen in which they offered their services. It is the first application I have had voluntarily for probably twelve months. Unfortunately we could not take them on—which very much disappointed me. My manager said we were overmanned—that is, we were turning out all the uppers we could with the machinists we had. The one branch is necessarily linked with the other

98. You were undermanned in regard to other parts?—Yes.

99. Were the undermanned parts parts in which you employed skilled labour?—Yes.

100. *Mr Poole.*] Do you consider there is a general prejudice against locally made stuff, *Mr Hannah*?—Yes, against certain grades. For instance, it is known that in regard to heavier stuff no such class of goods is imported. We can beat the world, and have done for many years, with heavy stuff suitable for the requirements of the country Another thing I might mention is that for every ten miles one travels in New Zealand one requires a different class of stuff.

101 You made reference to the increasing demand for British goods as against American? Yes.

102. Along with the preferential tariff, do you not think that the bringing of British methods up to date had something to do with the increased demand in the Dominion?—It had everything to do with it.

103 Apart from the difficulty in securing labour, and the increased cost, do you think that the other conditions are similar conditions for producing a first-class article?—Yes. There is the