

here with regard to the micrometer scale, in which it was shown that that scale could be imported here for £11, and it was sold for £30. I make that statement without reservation, and can prove it. We cannot make scales for £11. Australia has a 40-per-cent. tariff. The micrometer is not a spring scale, but the Dayton is, and so are many others of English and American make. Another matter I wish to mention is this: At the present time there is a good deal of work allowed with regard to the adjustment and rectification of scales by people who are altogether unqualified, and as additional safeguards to public interest we suggest as follows: (1.) That only registered persons or firms possessing the necessary qualifications be permitted to overhaul and adjust any weighbridge or weighing-machine deemed to affect public interest. Under existing conditions any "meddler" is allowed to effect so-called adjustment, and to replace into public commission the weighing-appliance without inspection by the Government Weights and Measures Inspector. (2.) That all hardware importers and merchants handling weighing-machines of any description for the purpose of resale should be compelled to submit to the Government Weights and Measures Inspector, for comparison with Government weights and stamped approval, any type of weighing-machine which it is proposed to deliver to a purchaser. At present there is no obligation on the part of any scale importer or retailer to ensure that the scale sold for public use is accurate, with the result that in many cases scales indicating especially short weights remain in everyday use for years, and it is a common occurrence to receive scales for repair which are almost in the last stages of dilapidation, and have never been submitted to a Government test. (3.) That all persons being in possession of any weighing-appliance of whatever make, or for whatever public use, shall be compelled at least annually to have the same inspected and thereupon registered by the Government Weights and Measures Department. The Railway Department claim to have their experts and not to come under the Act, and yet in many cases their weighing-appliances are inaccurate. With regard to annual inspection and registration by the Government Weights and Measures Department, a registration fee, according to the capacity of the weighing-appliance, could with advantage to the Government revenue be levied if necessary. My remarks apply particularly with regard to the scales of coal-merchants and public weighbridges. Our experience shows that in quite a number of cases—in fact, the majority of cases—scales are most unreliable. Any weight may be given to the consumer, and he has no means of checking. We also suggest that legislation should be brought in making all coal and so forth saleable by weight only.

*To Mr. Luke.*] We have eighteen employees in our factory. It is a growing industry in spite of disabilities. The principal objection to the spring scales is that they are subject to variation on account of atmospheric influences. No two springs can be made mathematically the same.

*To Mr. Hudson.*] The Government Weights and Measures Department is under the direction of the Health Department, which knows nothing of weights and measures. The New Zealand law should be similar to that of Great Britain.

G. W. SKELLERUP, of Para Rubber Company, examined. (No. 46.)

The first essential for a new industry is a market. Motor tires worth £92,000 were imported into the Dominion in January last, and £99,000 worth in June last year. The total importations for the year amounted to nearly £700,000—tires alone. Motor-cycle tires is another big item; probably £60,000 or £70,000 worth per annum are imported, but it is difficult to get the returns of these goods separately. The importations of garden-hose and other such articles would be in the vicinity of £100,000 a year, judging from our own turnover. Then there is rubber footwear. Gum boots come in free, and goloshes pay 33½ per cent. duty. Why the difference is made I do not know. In Australia one company employs 1,500 hands. There are one or two other fairly large firms there. The wages paid are good. The average wage of a tire-builder in America is generally about 5 dollars a day. It is a new industry. The plant needed is large. A plant with less than £70,000 capacity would be too restricted to be successful. At present the Customs tariff is only the 1-per-cent. primage duty. Nine-tenths of the rubber now comes from the Malay States—that is, the rubber is grown there. Rubber is the only article that has not increased in price during the war.

*To Mr. Luke.*] In regard to our own consumption, we are in quite as good a position as Australia. The duty in New Zealand is just the 1-per-cent. primage; there is no duty—that is, on motor-car tires.

*To Mr. Sidey.*] I do not think there is a company here ready to start work. I do not think anybody would invest money in it with that tariff. An alteration in the tariff has been mooted, but the tariff is rather difficult to alter on motor-car tires.

*To Mr. Veitch.*] A good deal of power is required. We employ about eleven or twelve men in our workshop.

*To Mr. Hornsby.*] A company starting would be under very heavy expenditure. They would have to import their foreman and superintendent, also a manufacturing chemist, and machinery would be a big item. I would suggest giving them a straight-out bonus of £1 for £1 in accordance with the plant they put up.

*To Mr. Sidey.*] I think one company should have a monopoly for three years. I think it would be fatal if more than one company were started. I think there should also be some alteration in the tariff.

*To Mr. Sidey.*] I would suggest that if any bonus were given it should be given to a purely New Zealand company—the shares should be owned in New Zealand.

*To Mr. Veitch.*] We ourselves sell probably £500 worth of hot-water bags, and they come in as druggists' sundries. Probably the chemists' sales of hot-water bags would amount to