

29. Do you consider it is as good or a better article ?—I cannot say ; but I consider it is, because I have to tell people so.
30. What does it cost you ?—It costs me, roughly, 7½d., and I sell it at 9d. and make 1½d. profit.
31. Have you made any special arrangements in regard to your stocking of that ?—Yes ; the conditions are that my competitors are not to be served with it.
32. Otherwise you fear that would be cut too ?—Yes, it would be.
33. Take Eno's fruit-salts : in order to buy Eno's on the best terms, how much do you have to spend ?—£10 16s.
34. And, buying in that way, what is the cost to you per bottle ?—3s. a bottle.
35. And you have been retailing it at ?—3s. 3d. a bottle ; sometimes 3s. 2d.
36. That does not show a big profit ?—No ; it is insufficient.
37. But still you sell it at that price ?—Yes.
38. As a matter of fact, can you sell it at that price ?—No.
39. I mean, are you forced to sell it at that price ?—Yes ; we make a slight profit.
40. At what price is the Self-help selling it ?—At the same price, so far as I know, or probably cheaper.
41. Do you know of other people selling it below 3s. 3d. ?—Yes, some are selling it at 3s.
42. Take Bell tea : what do you sell that at ?—2s. 11d. ; that is 5d. under the marked price.
43. What do you make on that ?—About a 1d. a pound. We have to buy five cases to get 2½ per cent. off.
44. That is not a paying profit ?—No.
45. Why do you sell it at that price ?—To meet the competition of the Self-help, who are selling it at the same price.
46. I think you used to sell Bell tea ?—I was selling five cases a month before Christmas. It enabled me to buy less 2½ per cent. I was selling at 2s. 11d.
47. May the Committee assume you were selling Bell tea to anybody who asked for it ?—Yes.
48. Did you at the time you are speaking of make any alterations in your methods ?—Yes ; I came to the conclusion that it was no good to me.
49. And what did you do ?—I set about packing a tea under my own brand—one that I could get a reasonable rate of profit from.
50. At what price do you buy your bulk tea ?—From 1s. 7d. to 2s. 2d.
51. Do you blend it ?—Yes.
52. Are you an expert ?—I do not say I am an expert, but I know how to blend.
53. And you get for that tea ?—From 2s. 4d. to 2s. 10d.
54. So that you get a profit of about 8d. ?—Yes, from 6d. to 8d.
55. What priced tea do you buy most of ?—I pay about 2s. mostly for the bulk tea.
56. Whereas you used to sell five cases of Bell tea a month, what do you sell of that brand now ?—About two cases.
57. Are you selling much of your own tea ?—Yes, selling a fair amount.
58. Are you selling it to people who ask for Bell tea ?—I do not mean in every case ?—If a person asks for ½ lb. of tea we hand them our own brand and they are satisfied.
59. Suppose anybody asks for Bell tea ?—We give them Bell tea.
60. Do you suggest to them that you have something just as good ?—Sometimes, yes.
61. If you were getting a reasonable profit from Bell tea, would you bother much about your own ?—Not so much, because it entails a lot of labour.
62. Bell tea has come down from 3s. 4d. to 2s. 11d. ?—Yes.
63. What view do your customers take of that fact ?—I mean the mere fact of its price coming down ?—Some ask whether it is the same Bell tea—the right Bell tea.
64. It creates suspicion in the minds of customers ?—Yes, certainly.
65. Take another line—St. Mungo's soap : do you stock that ?—Yes.
66. At what price do you sell that ?—1s. 7d.
67. What does it cost ?—1s. 7d. I believe that by buying 10 cases from one firm you can buy less 10 per cent. ; but sometimes a man does not want to carry ten cases.
68. Why have you been selling that at 1s. 7d. ?—To meet the competition of the Self-help. They are selling it at cost.
69. And you find you have to keep it ?—Yes ; it is an every-day line—everybody uses it.
70. During the three years that you have been in business have you managed to make both ends meet ?—Just about, and that is all.
71. Will you explain what you mean by that ? I mean, do you make substantial profits, or small profits, or a living-wage ?—I make a living-wage.
72. You have succeeded so far, at any rate, in making a living-wage ?—Yes.
73. And no more ?—No more.
74. What do you regard as a living-wage ?—(Witness handed in a slip of paper on which he wrote his answer to the question.)
75. Is that apart from your living-expenses ?—That includes my living-expenses.
76. *The Chairman.*] Do you supply your family with groceries ?—That is included in the figure I have supplied.
77. *Mr. Myers.*] What sort of hours do you work ?—I am always there at 8 in the morning and we close at 5.30 in the evening. If anything has to be done, I go back and do it.
78. So that you work long hours ?—Yes.
79. How many men have you been employing ?—One man, a junior, and a boy.
80. And you do a cash and credit business ?—Cash and credit at Willis Street, and cash only at Aro Street.