

188. Take, for instance, Carter's pills : at what price are they ordinarily sold, but not by you ?—About 1s. 6d.

189. That is the same price which they were ordinarily sold ?—I am not sure about that.

190. The ordinary price did not go up to the public ?—That is not really the ordinary price.

191. The market price on the packet has not gone up ?—That is so.

192. And the same applies to Johnson's baby-powder ?—They do not mark the price.

193. The price at which the article was to be sold to the public as fixed by the manufacturer was not increased ?—No.

194. Now, you referred to the cigarette-case [produced] which was bought for 1s. 6d. ?—Yes.

195. And which Mr. de Fenq said cost you 8s. 6d. per dozen, but according to you the cost was 12s.—from whom did you buy that article ?—[*Name deleted*]

196. Was it not [*Name deleted*] ?—I think it was [*Name deleted*].

197. Would you be good enough to produce the invoice ?—If I can.

198. And I will suggest to you that you will find that the goods were purchased at [*Name deleted*] ?—May I see the cigarette-case in question, because we have two lines—1s. and 1s. 6d. [Cigarette-case produced.] That is the 1s. line.

199. Mr. de Fenq paid 1s. 6d. ?—The assistant must have made some mistake about that.

200. At all events, the cost price of that cigarette-case is 8s. 6d. per dozen ?—Yes.

201. The gross profit which you get on various articles varies very considerably ?—Yes.

202. What is the lowest gross profit at which you sell any article ?—I think the lowest is contained in that statement which you have.

[*Questions 203 to 223 deleted as confidential evidence.*]

224. Now, I suppose you have not available—though I would like to see it if you have it—the figures showing how those items of expenses are made up in Mr. Lambert's letter ?—Just the ordinary expenses in business ?

225. Which include all wages ?—Yes.

226. How many people do you employ ?—Twenty-seven.

227. That is, twenty-seven other than yourself ?—We count ourselves because we draw wages.

228. What salary do you receive ?—[*Figures deleted*] per week.

229. You do not draw a director's fee ?—No.

230. Will you produce for the Committee particulars of these expenses ?—I can get our man to draw them out.

231. You will undertake to do that. I cannot ask questions on a mere thing like this [pointed out to witness] ?—It is clear enough.

232. You may think so, but I do not ?—It is just the expense of an ordinary business.

Mr. Collins : "Expense" is a very vague term.

Mr. Myers : Yes.

233. Mr. Myers (to witness).] Will you produce the invoice for Clements' tonic ?—Yes.

234. I understood you to say that you have no stocks of Palmolive soap now ?—No.

235. When did you run out of Palmolive ?—Three months ago, or round about that date.

236. How long is it since they brought their price-fixation scheme into operation ?—I cannot say. Mr. Butler would be able to tell you.

237. You had a pretty good stock at that time ?—Yes.

238. And bought up all you could ?—Yes.

239. And continued cutting ?—Yes. If any one asks for Palmolive we tell them that we have not got it, but that we can sell them New Zealand soap which is made in Dunedin, the weight being 5½ oz., for 5d., and we sell a tremendous quantity. I may say that the returns of the makers have gone up remarkably. I could show you, if necessary, what we pay them per year in toilet soaps alone. They do not advertise their bath and toilet soaps.

240. Do you sell bar soaps ?—Yes ; they are all wrapped up, except one make.

241. What is that one ?—It is just a plain almond-scented soap. It is not a good soap, and we do not sell much of it.

242. It is mostly fancy soaps you sell ?—Yes.

243. You claim the right, from what you say, to cut any article and sell it at your own price ?—Yes.

244. You claim the right to sell that article as cheaply as you like ?—Within reason, yes.

245. Mr. Kennedy.] Was not an attempt made to fix the price at which you retail Doulton and Wilkinson's crockery ?—Yes, that is so.

246. Do you sell in your business a large amount of crockery ?—Yes, a fair bit.

247. Is it marked ?—Nearly every article is stamped. As a matter of fact, all Doulton is stamped in a corner similar to the one produced.

248. You sell in your business brushware, enamelware, and all the requisites of the kitchen ?—Yes.

249. They are all almost invariably stamped with the name of the makers ?—Yes.

250. As clearly visible as these marks here [cup and saucer produced] ?—Yes.

251. The new price of Kolynos will be a charge above what you previously charged ?—Yes.

252. And the price of Johnson's baby-powder and Carter's liver pills will be above what you previously sold at ?—Yes.

253. You also told the Committee that this cigarette-case [produced] is one that you sell at 1s., and not at 1s. 6d. ?—Yes.

254. Mr. Hayward.] I think you mentioned that you do not sell anything under cost ?—No.