

sale of old types. Perhaps I could class Kolynos as an old type of tooth-paste which is a very good seller. Euthymol has a very large sale, and there is Colgate's, and there is a line called Zepto that has a very large sale, and there are also many other lines. I am of opinion that to-day Pepsodent is getting one of the largest sales—in fact, it is running very close to Kolynos.

106. How do you find Gibbs' dentifrice?—A very good seller.

107. Has it come on to the market with a rush during recent years?—Yes, it has come on with a good rush; it has picked up very well.

108. You told the Committee that you had been able to buy in some cases direct from the manufacturers?—In very many cases.

109. Have they sold to you openly?—In some cases yes, and in some cases no.

110. Incidentally, did the P.A.T.A. organizer wait on you?—Certainly not. As a matter of fact, we did not know that the P.A.T.A. was formed, or being formed, until we heard of it quite recently.

111. Is there any matter that I have not mentioned which you feel you would like to tell the Committee?—We know that if the P.A.T.A. is allowed to operate here it would have the effect of driving us out of business, because, as I have said, it would control 70 per cent. of the goods we carry; practically 70 per cent. of the lines we carry are proprietary lines. If we had to be put on the same footing in the matter of selling as the chemist we would have no inducement whatever to offer to bring the customers to us, say, from the suburbs, because the chemist gives service and the people look upon him as having a little more knowledge, and the majority of them give a discount coupon. The people come to us because they feel they can buy a little cheaper than from the chemist, and they are quite willing to make that saving without the service, and we feel that we are saving the customer a great deal in that respect.

112. Are you able to tell the Committee whether the number of wholesale distributing houses has to any material extent increased in recent years?—Within the last ten years I am not quite positive, but I think there are at least five that have started in Wellington within recent years.

113. And who handle the class of goods you keep?—Only proprietary lines.

114. How many have gone out of business—say, ten years back?—I can mention one—namely, Nathan. Although they are still wholesalers, they do not do general business at the present time. Yet they used to do a very big business at one time—that is to say, they were wholesale grocers and everything. Of course, I am going back a good many years.

115. You hold the view, then, do you not, that under the present system you can economize with a large turnover?—Yes, we have proved it.

116. You think your prices are fixed which will enable you to sell economically to the public on a large turnover?—Absolutely.

117. When you do buy from the wholesaler you buy in large quantities, do you not?—Yes; and some of our buying is bigger than the wholesaler.

118. I think you further object to the P.A.T.A. on the ground that there would be no provision for reducing prices as well as your stocks, or for acquiring low-selling lines, or for meeting your commitments in emergency?—That is so. As a matter of fact, we hold sales periodically, and if the P.A.T.A. functioned it would practically cut that out altogether.

119. You want to have the right to pass your economies on to the public to a certain extent?—Yes. May I state that in some cases we get a benefit of from 15 to 20 per cent. through buying big—that is, on wholesale prices. Under the P.A.T.A. we would have to put that into our pocket if we wished to carry on.

120. *Mr. Collins.*] Your previous answer seems to imply that you could not buy big if you join the P.A.T.A.?—We could buy from outside—that is, from England—fairly big.

121. But you would not have the turnover?—That is so.

122. *Mr. Kennedy.*] The success of your business is being able to offer low prices without service?—Yes.

123. And if the P.A.T.A. functions you would not have a lower price?—We would not have a lower price.

124. The class of article, on the whole, which you sell is what the ordinary housewife is frequently needing?—That is so.

125. You are not catering specially for other than the poorer class?—Yes, those who look at a shilling before they spend it, and naturally they go to the shop where they can get the commodity at the best price. May I give the Committee an example?

126. Yes.—The other day I was standing alongside an assistant in the shop and a lady came in for a certain article and asked the assistant, and when she was informed that it was a certain price she said that she could get it anywhere at that price and walked out of the shop. That is a customer we lost. I am referring to aspro, and we charge the tariff price for that article.

127. *Mr. Gresson.*] I understood you to say that the operations of the P.A.T.A. would prevent you from buying big: do you mean buying from the manufacturer at Home? What I do not understand is this: if a manufacturer has his goods on the list of the P.A.T.A., then you will not be able to buy direct from him?—Not unless we adhere to the P.A.T.A. conditions.

128. Then, if you adhere to the P.A.T.A. conditions, would you be able to buy direct from the manufacturer and thus eliminate the wholesaler?—No, I do not think so.

129. *Mr. Myers.*] You deal in fancy-goods?—Yes.

130. How many hundreds of lines do you have that you deal in?—I could not count them.

131. Well, then, fancy-goods?—Our stocks run into thousands of lines—that is, fancy-goods.

132. I am not referring to patent medicines and that class of article?—I think you class patent foods and things like that—fancy soap, &c.—as fancy-goods.