

133. We will eliminate them. I am referring to articles which you obtain from the wholesalers or other stores?—It is hard to define what are fancy-goods. We do not keep toys.

134. Dolls?—No.

135. You style yourself as the “Fancy Goods Emporium”?—That is so. We state on our billheads “All lines.”

136. When I speak of fancy-goods I mean articles that are not packed?—Face-powders are classed as fancy-goods.

137. I am speaking of those classes of goods which are called fancy goods which have not the name of the manufacturer thereon?—There is a very small percentage; I would not say there is 5 per cent.

138. I have no doubt that the members of the Committee will see that for themselves if they desire to go into your shop?—Yes, and I would be very pleased to show them through.

139. You deal in hardware, do you not?—Yes, kitchen hardware.

140. You have, have you not, a vast number of articles in that category?—Yes.

141. Then, you also deal in crockery, do you not?—Yes.

142. You deal in a vast number of items other than that: we can eliminate crockery and iron-mongery from the proprietary lines?—No.

143. Why not?—Because they are proprietary lines.

144. Are they?—They are. May I show you this article, which is a proprietary line? [Witness here took a cup and saucer from his bag.]

145. I beg to differ from you?—It is recognized as a proprietary article.

146. When you say that 70 per cent. of your goods are, or may be, proprietary articles you are including many of your articles of crockery?—Yes, because it has not been proved to me that they are not proprietary articles.

147. And many articles of hardware?—Yes, which are proprietary articles too.

148. They are not done up in packets and sold individually?—No.

149. I think we will have to remain at cross-purposes on the point, and that is why I suggest the Committee should have a look at the premises themselves?—I wish they would. I would be only too willing to show them through.

150. You say that you are able to buy in some cases from the manufacturer in England through the broker?—Through our own English buyer. The manufacturers send their representative around perhaps once or twice a year.

151. Sometimes when you buy in New Zealand through the wholesaler you get cut prices, do you not?—There are times when they have a line that they want to clear, and they let us have that line at a cheap price because they know we are keen buyers.

152. Sometimes when you want to buy goods through the wholesaler you do not go direct yourselves, but you get the goods through some other person, who may be regarded as your agent?—I did not quite understand your question.

*Mr. Kennedy:* If my friend pursues this cross-examination I would like the room to be cleared.

*Mr. Collins:* I would be pleased if all those present, other than counsel, would leave the room for the time being.

[Questions 153 to 172 deleted as confidential evidence.]

173. I asked you before with respect to the different number of lines or articles that you stocked in fancy-goods, but you could not tell me because we were at cross-purposes as to what was meant by fancy-goods?—Yes.

174. Can you tell me with any degree of approximation the total number of lines that you stock?—No.

175. I appreciate your difficulty. Would it amount to thousands?—Yes.

176. Now, you stated before that the price of certain articles which you named had gone up to the retailer—that is, to say the wholesaler's price is fixed by the manufacturer at which the goods were to be sold to the public?—I said that the price had gone up to the retailer through the wholesaler.

177. Yes, I know?—I do not know anything about the manufacturer.

178. After the price was fixed by or on behalf of the manufacturer?—Yes.

179. And you instanced Kolynos?—Yes.

180. It is a fact, is it not, taking that article as an illustration, that the price which was fixed by the manufacturer as the retail price was the same price as that which had always been marked on the packet as the retail price—namely, 1s. 6d.?—The retail price has always been 1s. 6d.

181. So that, taking that as an illustration, the ordinary price to the retailer was not affected, except in the case where it was cut?—It was affected to the retailer to the extent of 6d.

182. That is to say, you had previously purchased from the wholesaler at what price?—13s.

183. And you say it was 13s. 6d.?—Yes.

184. The public were not, however, affected, except that you say you cannot sell at the same price at which you sold before?—We could if we wished to do it. We are selling the article at 1s. 2d. and we intend to sell it at that.

185. When you say you had previously obtained the article wholesale at 13s., are you speaking of the price at which you purchased the article, or are you speaking of the price at which retailers generally bought from the wholesaler?—Any retailer could buy at 13s., provided they purchased 13-gross lots. To us that is a small quantity.

186. You previously paid 13s.?—The same as any other retailer.

187. You said afterwards, when the price was fixed, you had to pay 13s. 6d.?—We did not have any competition then, and they put us on the black-list.