

58. It would not mean a very large thing taking all the wool-bordered mats in New Zealand?—I think that would employ eight or ten looms.

59. Can you make any suggestions? Is there any way by which it would be possible to distinguish prison-manufactured goods from free-labour manufactured goods—*i.e.*, English-manufactured goods?—An expert could distinguish them, but not an ordinary person, unless they are marked in some way. They could be stamped.

60. They would require to be stamped by the exporter?—Yes; in India, or elsewhere.

61. Supposing you got an adjustment of this matter, what amount of duty would you require upon the present manufactured article, if specially distinguished from any other article, to enable you to command the trade?—I am hardly competent to deal with that question.

62. Take the article manufactured by you—a dozen mats cost £1 14s. The article that comes in here bears a duty of 15 per cent., yet a dozen mats can be imported for £1 7s.: what duty would be required to equalize the two?—It would require something like 15 per cent. additional.

63. Supposing you had to impose a duty, would you recommend that it should be imposed *ad valorem* or upon measurement?—Upon the actual value.

64. I might mention that, according to the statistics of the colony for 1893, the total value of the mats imported from India was £361 in twelve months?—That is the declared value.

65. Do you contend that the statistics do not represent the facts?—I say they do not represent the actual value of the gaol-manufactured goods imported into the colony in twelve months. They come from other sources. They come to me simply as agents' goods.

66. Then, are we to understand that the mats imported direct from Bengal do not represent the total number that comes from India?—No.

67. How else do they come?—From Sydney.

68. The total amount we have from Sydney is £112; from Melbourne, £415: so that altogether it would only amount to £1,000?—That is the declared value.

69. Do you think any find their way here by way of England?—I think it is more than possible.

70. *Mr. Tanner.*] You think it possible a large amount might find its way into the hands of English agents which is re-exported, and whether it reaches us from Sydney or direct from England we have no certain knowledge that it is London manufacture?—It simply comes as coir manufacture.

71. *The Chairman.*] As a matter of opinion, what would you imagine would be the relative values of the coir mats and cocoanut matting imported into the colony? Which do you think would represent the larger value, cocoanut matting or coir mats?—The mats, I think.

72. *Mr. Hutchison.*] Do you make mattings?—Yes; and I supply the Union Steamship Company.

73. *The Chairman.*] Is there anything not brought out by the questions that you would like to mention?—I think you have touched upon all material matters.

74. We have endeavoured to get at the bottom of it, and your grievance amounts to this: that there is not sufficient protection as against the articles imported from India, and manufactured by prison labour?—Yes; imported directly or indirectly.

75. And at present the state of things does not enable you to employ any hands, and, so far as you know, there is no other manufacturer of these goods in the colony; this difficulty you say could be adjusted, in your opinion, by an increased duty of 15 per cent., making the duty 30 per cent. instead of 15 per cent. Also, you would then be able to employ a hundred hands; and, further, that in connection with the woollen ornamental goods, or fancy goods, the trade would employ ten or twelve looms?—That is so.

76. That is the whole of your evidence?—Yes.

77. In the estimate you have put in of £1 7s. for a dozen mats, have you made any allowance for wear-and-tear and machinery?—No.

78. Would 10 per cent. be a fair allowance?—Yes; it would just about cover it.

79. What would be a fair ordinary retail price?—I sell wholesale.

80. What would be a fair manufacturer's profit?—The mats I get £1 18s. for—that is, 3s. 2d. a mat; they sell for 4s. 9d. to 5s. retail.

81. Supposing you were employing labour, and had the manufacture in your own hands, what would be the rate of wages your employes would average?—From £2 to £2 10s. a week.

82. Taking it all round, how many men would you employ?—About one hundred: one-third men, one-third lads, and one-third boys. The men would earn in wages £2 10s. a week, the lads £1 to £1 5s., and the boys 10s. to 15s.

Addendum.

Sir,—
43, Cambridge Terrace, Wellington, 5th February, 1895.
I omitted to inform the Commissioners, when before them this morning, that I have been advised that all the English gaol manufactures were now sold for exportation only, their sale for consumption in the United Kingdom being strictly prohibited. This is also the system adopted in America.

E. W. Kane, Esq., Secretary, Tariff Commission.

I am, &c.,

B. DANKS.

(2.) HERBERT READ and GEORGE FENWICK examined.

83. *The Chairman.*] What are you, Mr. Read?—Glass-bevellers.

84. How long have you been in this place?—About two and a half years in Wellington.

85. Were you in business prior to that elsewhere?—No; I served my time in England.

86. Does your firm employ other persons?—No; only our two selves.

87. Are there any other glass-bevellers in this town?—No. Before we came to the colony we understood that glass—round, square, bevelled, &c.—was admitted free, and we thought we would come under that heading.

88. I am advised the present duty is imposed under a Commissioners' decision, and is not specified in the original tariff. You say you came to the colony to enter into this business on the