

## EMILE WILLIAM DE FENQ, sworn and examined. (No. 2.)

1. *Mr. Myers.*] You are resident now in Wellington, are you not?—Yes.
2. And are the organizer of the P.A.T.A. in England?—Yes.
3. I understand that some years ago you were associated with the P.A.T.A. in New South Wales?—Yes.
4. For how long?—Roughly speaking, for about eleven years.
5. You know, I think, that there had been an inquiry, which has already been referred to, held in or about the year 1920?—Yes.
6. At the time of the inquiry, I think, the operations of the P.A.T.A. had been temporarily suspended?—Yes.
7. When did you first become aware as to the nature of Mr. Justice Beeby's report?—This morning.
8. Did the P.A.T.A. endeavour to get a copy of it?—It was never released to them.
9. You can tell us, I suppose, whether or not the P.A.T.A. is now in active operation in New South Wales?—Yes, it is.
10. And has been for how long since the inquiry ceased?—It was reorganized in 1922.
11. And has been continuously operating since?—Yes.
12. Throughout New South Wales?—Yes.
13. Have proceedings ever been taken against it?—None whatsoever.
14. When did you come to New Zealand?—Originally in October, 1925.
15. Did you remain here then?—Until December; and I returned to Australia, and returned again in January, 1926, and have remained here ever since.
16. Are you aware that prior to your coming here there was a society called the Chemists' Defence Association?—Yes.
17. And did that operate on practically the same lines as the P.A.T.A.?—Yes.
18. I think you have organized the P.A.T.A. at the request of a number of traders in New Zealand?—Exactly.
19. Has the P.A.T.A. actually commenced operations in New Zealand?—No.
20. I think you voluntarily agreed not to at the suggestion of the Board of Trade?—Exactly.
21. Seeing that an inquiry would be held?—Yes, early in November.
22. However, you can tell the Committee to what extent you have succeeded in obtaining adherence to the P.A.T.A. You can take any particular section you like?—It has been organized in four different sections—namely, the retail chemists, the wholesalers and the retailers, and manufacturers and manufacturers' agents, and something like forty manufacturers have signified their willingness to join up with the association because they realize that such a movement is necessary for the protection of their various articles.
23. When you speak of manufacturers' agents I suppose you speak of manufacturers outside New Zealand?—Exactly. I think there are about two or three wholesalers who have not actually signified their intention to support the P.A.T.A.; every chemist in New Zealand but five, and 147 retail grocers in Wellington and over 150 retail grocers in Auckland. At that period I discontinued organizing for the time being.
24. At the time when you commenced organizing did you make any investigation yourself as to the necessity or otherwise of such an organization?—Yes. I interviewed a number of manufacturers first, and in each case it was unanimously agreed that something had to be done owing to the drastic state of affairs.
25. What drastic state of affairs?—The cutting of prices—that is to say, many lines being sold at below invoice cost; and this meant a natural dropping-off of sales and a consequent loss to the retailers who were handling the goods.
26. Did you make inquiries from the retailers and wholesalers?—I interviewed the wholesalers and then the retailers.
27. I think you have copies available of your constitution. Did you bring them with you?—No.
28. I have a copy of them here. This is the constitution?—Yes.
29. That also shows the list of your executive, does it not?—Yes.
30. Before proceeding any further, you heard the last witness, Mr. Charter, giving his evidence, did you not?—Yes.
31. Have you in your constitution any rule against co-operative societies such as he has referred to being in existence in England?—No.
32. Co-operative societies are supposed to sell at fixed prices if they join up with your association?—Yes; they may make a rebate to their customers according to the amount of their profits.
33. If they make an increased profit they may give it back?—Yes.
34. Give it back on the produce or in the form of dividends?—Yes, exactly.
35. How would you describe the majority of the articles which you anticipate going on the P.A.T.A. list: would they be chemists' goods, or what?—Wholly and solely patent-medicine preparations—patent-medicine and proprietary toilet preparations.
36. Soaps?—Yes, maybe. We have had many applications for lines that might be termed foodstuffs, but they refuse their application in the way of foodstuffs, such as Allenbury's.
37. So far as the business of the chemist is concerned, from the knowledge you have acquired in the P.A.T.A. business in Australia and from your investigation in New Zealand, are there any special features about the business of the chemist which require protection of this kind?—Do you mean in reference to price?