

article itself comes in free, it would appear reasonable that the material should come in free too. Though there may be some overlapping and the material be used perhaps for a purpose other than that for which it was intended, still the Customs could have power to ask for a declaration that the material would be used for the manufacture of that article only. Seeing that this is already the law with respect to some commodities, it should apply to these, and as long as we gave a declaration that the material was imported for these specific lines we should get it in free. Then, there are other lines that might be thought further about—for instance, lubricating-oils. We have to pay 25 per cent. duty on them, and that, of course, has a tendency to increase the cost of manufacture.

14. Are these imported by the American trust?—Well, the Standard Oil Company are the chief importers of oils into New Zealand, and this oil naturally comes in through them; but, no matter which way it comes in, if we have to pay duty on it that still increases the cost of manufacture. I think it fair to ask that oil for running machinery should come in duty-free, seeing that we have no means of making it in the colony. We use the colonial oil for screwing purposes, and we shall be compelled to use it whether there is any duty on the other oils or not; but lubricating-oils, I think, should be admitted duty-free. That these oils should be dutiable is also antagonistic to the principle that the raw material for the manufacture of articles that come in free should be admitted duty-free also.

15. *Mr. Laurenson* (to *Mr. Cooper*).] *Mr. Cooper* made a statement about the number of travellers that the Harvester Trust had in Canterbury. How many travellers do you think they have, *Mr. Cooper*—have you any idea?—I have fairly reliable information that there are fifteen in Canterbury.

16. Are they on all the year round?—Well, it is only a little time ago that they were put on.

17. (To *Mr. Duncan*): You gave a comparison between the price—retail—charged in England for certain agricultural implements, and the price charged here. Have you any similar data about the retail price charged in America for similar agricultural implements?—No, I have not. They do not bring into this country the same implements that I enumerated.

18. You gave us a comparison with respect to reapers-and-binders—\$100 before the trust commenced operations and \$130 afterwards?—That was *Mr. Miller's* evidence. That is what we are afraid of. These people will take these implements that we manufacture now—if we do not get some substantial duty put on the American article—make them in America, and send them back here to sell.

19. On certain articles you ask for a duty and on others you do not; for instance, you do not ask for a duty on hay-making machinery, traction and oil engines, &c. Have you any idea of the price they retail these articles at in America—is it higher or lower than that at which they are retailing similar articles at here, now that the trust has come here?—I could not say. The only thing of the kind that we come into competition with is hay-rakes, and they sell these here very much cheaper than we manufacture them at. Our hay-rake is a heavier article, and we charge more for it.

20. *Mr. Alison* (to *Mr. Cooper*).] Can you tell the Committee the total value of the implements manufactured in the colony last year of the kind that you are now asking for the imposition of a 40-per-cent. duty upon?—No. I do not know how that could be got at. We gave the total value of our combined manufactures, but we are not asking for the imposition of a duty upon all we manufacture.

Mr. Dawe: I might just explain those figures of mine. Of the £300,000 representing our sales for the year, perhaps £250,000 would be articles manufactured in the colony on which we ask for the imposition of a duty, and the balance would be goods that we do not manufacture here. We simply ask for a duty on those things that can be made in New Zealand.

21. *Mr. Alison* (to *Mr. Dawe*).] If a 40-per-cent. duty is imposed on certain agricultural implements on which you are asking that it shall be levied, will the manufacturers then be able to compete with the Harvester Trust?—Yes, we consider they will.

The Chairman: I might point out, *Mr. Alison*, that the manufacturers do not ask for a 40-per-cent. duty. It was the workers that did.

Mr. Dawe: What we ask is that for everything we take off something be put on the imported article for us. We are reducing our price-list from one end to the other.

22. *Mr. Alison* (to *Mr. Dawe*).] Are you reducing the price-list as against the charges which you are making yourselves as manufacturers, or against the prices at which the Harvester Trust supply the implements?—Our own catalogue prices. We will take our own catalogues as they stand printed to-day, and deposit them with the Government, and say, "There is our catalogue; we will reduce those prices." If necessary we would give a duplicate invoice to whoever you might appoint, and we should then be able to say, "There is our catalogue price, and there is our reduced price." The farmer would have both figures in front of him.

23. What would the difference be?—Take a double-furrow plough. Say, it is £20 now, we would make the price £19. And other things would be reduced in proportion.

24. What is the difference between the price of the New Zealand manufacturer and that at which the trust is selling that article?—The prices are given in those figures that have been handed in.

25. Is the trust competing at all?—Yes.

26. Can you inform the Committee of the prices which they charge?—Their prices are hardly made public yet.

27. You say that you would benefit the farmer, but you are not able to show that you would benefit the farmer, comparing the prices of the New Zealand manufacturers and the prices charged by the trust at the present time?

Mr. Cooper: Exhibit E shows the "Osborne" prices for 1905 and *Cooper and Duncan's* for the same year, and when we say that we will reduce the price of, say, disc harrows, as shown on