

that wages shall be paid fortnightly.' Clauses 30 and 32: These clauses mean an additional tax on manufacturers of 12 per cent. added to the cost of labour, which in many industries in New Zealand will prevent a profit being made, and will cripple all. It will mean largely increased importations. It will be very unfair to those employers who have been recently before the Arbitration Court, and, on the basis of these holidays not having to be paid for, have had awards made extending over a considerable period. It will mean increased work for the Arbitration Court, as employers will have to apply for a reduction in wages to enable these holidays to be paid for. Clause 33: We would point out that these clauses, as carried out to the letter of the Act, would involve conditions almost impossible to be carried out, or at such addition to capital as few industries can stand. These clauses, if rigidly enforced by any Inspector, would mean the closing for a considerable time of many works. It is too much power to put into any one man's hands, and at least an appeal to the Chief Inspector should be allowed. At the present time, although careful and strict where it is necessary, the Inspectors carry out the present Act in its spirit and not in its strict letter, and all sections of the community are satisfied. Clauses 34 and 35: What constitutes default should be made clearer; if something else than refusal to carry out the instructions of the Inspector, these two clauses are too penal, and place a responsibility on the employer he should not carry."

Mr. ALEXANDER VEITCH, Wellington, examined. (No. 8.)

*Mr. Veitch:* Mr. Chairman and gentlemen,—As representing the Wellington Employers' Association, and knowing the views of other associations throughout the colony, this small deputation here this morning will indicate the widespread dismay which has been caused by the introduction of this Bill. There are employers from every part of the colony here, from the north to the south, and yesterday, I think, there were some here who ought to have been able to go back home to-day. We could have had a very much larger number here, but probably you do not want to see more than we have here at the present at one time. As to the views of my association with regard to this Bill, it is considered that the provisions affecting the employment of males are entirely unnecessary; indeed, they are highly mischievous. It might be necessary to provide for the protection of women and young persons, and to limit their hours of employment; but with regard to male adults it is quite unnecessary, seeing that we have the machinery of the Conciliation Board and Arbitration Court to regulate these things. Indeed, it will be found, in looking up awards which have been made by the Arbitration Courts, that the hours in many and most cases, I think, are in excess of the hours provided for in this Bill, and other provisions are less strict than in this Bill with regard to the employment of males. It must not be forgotten that the Arbitration Court and Conciliation Board have spent a very great deal of time and given great attention to these matters. They have inquired into the necessities in these industrial disputes that have been before them, and after all this careful inquiry they, in most cases, permit the working of longer hours than this Bill allows. There are many things in the Bill which I will leave others to direct attention to. There is one thing, however, which I might refer to. I think the Bill provides that on Saturday afternoon no work shall be done. You can imagine in many factories how that would affect the industry. I think the Gas Company would be a factory under the Act. Shall we be without light on a Saturday because it will be illegal to employ men? I shall not take up the Committee's time longer, seeing there are so many here who wish to speak. Mr. Booth, who represents the Canterbury Employers' Association, is here, and probably you will permit him to give the views of his association.

Mr. G. T. BOOTH, Canterbury, examined. (No. 9.)

*Mr. Booth:* I think I can summarise in a very few minutes what the Canterbury Employers' Association as a body wishes to say in respect to the proposed measure. I will begin by stating that the Canterbury Employers' Association is a somewhat important organization, comprising as it does nearly all, if not all, the manufacturing industries and employing trades in the District of Canterbury. The first thing we wish to put before the Committee is that existing legislation, in the shape of "The Factories Act, 1894," with its amendments, and certain other Acts specially dealing with the employment of women and children, affords the workers sufficient protection, or as much protection as it is possible to give them by general legislation. The Factories Act has borne rather hardly upon some industries, but adjustments have taken place, and at present things are working fairly smoothly in accordance with the Act and its amendments. We therefore submit that no further legislation is needed, although there, of course, could be no objection to a consolidation of the present Acts for the purpose of simplification. We wish to say, further, that if this is not the case, if the workers do require consideration beyond what the Legislature has given them in the shape of these various Acts, if the workers engaged in any particular trade or locality require special protection, they have the Boards of Conciliation and the Court of Arbitration set up to consider any appeals they may wish to make. So far as the Boards of Conciliation are concerned, there is some difference of opinion as to their efficiency; but as to the Court of Arbitration, there is no doubt that it is a thoroughly competent Court. The members are thoroughly qualified to deal with matters coming within their jurisdiction, and the jurisdiction of the Court is wide enough to cover all the ground. The Court makes it its business to inquire closely and exhaustively into all the conditions prevailing in a particular trade, or in a particular locality, and after such exhaustive examination gives an award which is as nearly as possible just and equitable as between the parties. The proposed Factories Act will have the effect of reducing the jurisdiction of the Court of Arbitration, inasmuch as the questions of hours, rates of overtime, and holidays are