

pay for forty-eight hours although we only work for the forty-seven hours. The Act proposes to reduce the hours to forty-four, and in the towns we are not allowed to work after 1 o'clock on Saturdays; consequently we cannot work forty-five hours; it will be forty-four, and we will have to base our calculations on forty-four. Clause 19 says we are not allowed to work overtime on a half-holiday. In a big mill like ours we have to employ at least twenty men cleaning out the mill in order to start the men on Monday mornings. If this Act becomes law we cannot clean out our mill Saturday afternoons, and will have to start at 10 o'clock in the morning. It will be better not to on work at all on Saturdays, and only work the forty hours per week. That, of course, would be a great loss. The Bill provides that there is only to be six hours' overtime per week. If we have to work overtime at all we have to pay time and a-quarter. Frequently, if an island boat comes in, we get from five to six hours to load in, and then the men have to work overtime; or it may be two or three hours only, the boat having to leave again. According to this new Act, that working overtime would be impossible—the men would have to get an hour for tea between 5 and 6 and start again at 6. With regard to the payment for holidays—clause 32—that would mean, as far as my own particular branch is concerned, £482. Speaking of the Auckland branch of the Kauri Timber Company, if we paid for six holidays £482 that would be for work not done. At present it has cost our company $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to insure our employés. In addition to that, I find in the new Act there is a penalty for another £100, which we think is unfair. We are coming into competition very much with the American people, and from my own knowledge the hours I worked in America were from sixty to sixty-six hours per week, and I know from experience they can turn out their stuff considerably cheaper than we can. I find, according to the Year-book, the timber imported amounted to £83,000; and a good deal of this timber is imported by the Government themselves. In driving through the country we see many sleepers and other timber which is imported from Australia. We thought that for cheapness and quality kauri had no superior, but find in Australia lots of cheaper lines that can do the work as well. This is the Kauri Company only I have spoken of. In addition to representing that company, in connection with Mr. Goldie I also represent the Auckland Sawmillers' Association. In the Kauri Timber Company we pay in wages in the city £480 weekly, and in the country £900. We work in the city mills forty-seven hours per week and in the country mills fifty-two hours. The loss through the Factories Bill on holidays would be £1,380—six days. The loss of hours in the city would be three hours per week, equalling three weeks and a half at £480—£1,680. Then take eight hours off the fifty-two in the country, reducing it to forty-four, and which is equal to nine weeks of the year at £900, equals £8,100. The loss on the plant, which produces £15,800 per annum, is £1,580. This new Bill means a loss of 8 per cent., or a total loss per annum of £12,740. It would mean even a greater loss than this, as, on account of clearing up *débris* and overtime being paid at time and a half, we would have to close altogether on Saturday, and reduce the hours to forty. That is the Kauri Timber Company. With regard to the Auckland Sawmillers' Association, the value of the running plant is £69,000, and they pay in wages per annum £49,900; they pay in wages £998 per week and work at present forty-seven hours. The summary of loss through the Factories Bill is—holidays, six days, equal to one week, £998; and the loss of hours, three hours per week, equals three weeks and a half in the year, at £998—£3,493. The loss on use of plant produces, say, 10 per cent., equal to £6,900, and the loss of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on that equals £448—or a total loss to the Aucklanders of £4,939. I might also show we manufacture a considerable amount of joinery; and this is a letter sent to us from a firm of manufacturers in America, showing how they can land the stuff here cheaper than we can make it. Although there is a 2s. duty on a door we charge 11s. 6d. for, it can be landed in Auckland for 9s. 6d.; another door can be landed at 8s. 3d., for which we charge 11s. 6d.; another at 9s. 3d., for which we charge 12s.; another at 10s. 9d., for which we charge 15s.; another at 14s., for which we charge 16s. 3d.; and so on. The last time I was in San Francisco I was at a sash-and-door company which manufactured these doors. These were generally exported out of the country. During the last fight we had with the Conciliation Board this is a letter which was sent to me. It came to me from the manager of the New Zealand Pine Company, which has started cutting timber at the Bay of Islands. Here is a portion of the letter. He said: "It would be as well to inform the Conciliation Board the disadvantages the kauri-mills, that cut for export, have to contend with in Australia and England, having to compete in the open market against the Oregon-pine mills, in all about forty-four mills, having a daily capacity of four to five million feet. Logs cost at those mills—the highest price—\$6 per 1,000 ft. superficial, or 2s. 6d. per 100 ft. Cost of milling per 1,000 ft. is \$2.25, or 11d. per 100 ft. at ships' slings. The freight is £2 from Puget Sound to Sydney, or 4s. per 100 ft. Logs cost 2s. 6d. per 100 ft., sawing costs 11d. per 100 ft., freight costs 4s. per 100 ft.—equalling 7s. 5d. in Sydney. The above price may vary a little as the freights go up or down. I have known cargoes of Oregon to be sold at 6s. 8d. at ship's slings in Sydney. If the Commonwealth Parliament puts a duty on kauri timber from New Zealand, it will paralyse the industry." Some nine months ago I visited Sydney, and something of that kind was happening then. It might be said, Why are we not smart enough to compete with these people? The circumstances here are altogether different. Their timber is more easily worked, the lengths are longer and the means of getting it to the mills much better, and it does not decrease in value the same as our kauri does any way. I would ask you to remember that we have endeavoured all through, notwithstanding that it has been very irksome, to me especially, to conform with the labour-laws now on the statute-book. We have done so, and the present Factory Act has suited very well. We have got into the working of it, and I think, for the good of the workers themselves, and to prevent ruination to the manufacturers, the matter must be left standing as it is.