

131. I suppose there are a considerable number of boys employed about your place?—Yes more particularly in the preserving part of the works.

132. In your own opinion as a worker, do you think that there is any objection to the present Act so far as the boy-labour is concerned?—No, I certainly do not.

133. Now, you represent the unanimous voice of the employés, with the exception of the slaughterman and the tinsmiths?—That is not quite correct. I said the majority. There are a certain number of men employed there such as engineers, firemen, and a few odd hands who are employed all the year round. They get their ordinary week's wages, and they see by this Bill that the hours will be reduced, and I surmise they will be well pleased to see it go through.

134. *Mr. Hardy.*]—Are you continually employed by the company?—I have been in the company's employ for about fifteen years. Last year I had about three months on quarter time.

135. Did you go out and look for work at other places?—No, I did not.

136. Did many men similarly situated to yourself go out looking for other work?—I do not know of one having done so.

137. They work about their homes or gardens do they not?—Yes.

138. They do not go out and compete with other men?—No; I do not know of one instance where they have done so.

139. You think, then, it is necessary that you should get the rate of wages that you now receive in order to keep you?—That is so; I shall have to go out otherwise.

140. *Mr. Hutcheson.*] You are in the preserving-works, are you not?—Yes.

141. Speaking for the works generally, do you think the employers would have any difficulty in getting a sufficient amount of labour to cope with the work during the busy season in complying with these restrictive conditions?—At the present time, I believe they would have great difficulty. In a year or two's time they might enlarge the works. A man used to this class of work will do more in a given time than probably any two men.

142. Have you any reason to believe that the employers have shown the present employés any consideration in not seeking to flood Petone with workmen? Have they shown any indication to you of their intention to consider the employés, inasmuch that they do not seek to flood the market?—That is so.

143. Do you think it would be impossible for them, if they laid themselves properly out for it, to get as many men as they liked—to attract men in the busy season—if they were regardless of how these men fared when they were done with them?—They certainly would not get them.

144. They could get more than they have at present?—I dare say they could, but I do not think they could cope with the work.

145. They could get more?—Yes.

146. And the more they got, the worse it would be for you?—Yes.

147. By spreading the whole year's work over the period of twelve months, they show as much consideration as they can for the employés, and they are enabled to provide for these employés a reasonable yearly living?—Yes.

148. It is only because they show consideration for their employés that that would be so?—Yes.

149. It would not be so if they were compelled to do otherwise?—No.

150. *Mr. Ell.*] What is your position in the factory, Mr. Carter?—I am in the packing-room—the preserving-room.

151. What is your position there?—Leading hand.

152. You say you represent the majority. How do you arrive at that conclusion? Was there a meeting held?—There was a meeting held in the fellmongery, and their representative waited on me with a petition seeking for exemption, and asked me to pass it through our department. I did so, and again passed it through the other departments, and that is how we have arrived at the majority.

153. By a meeting of each section?—There has never been a general meeting. The petition has been placed before the men, and they have been told: there is the petition and there is the Bill; now you can do as you like, either sign it or otherwise. To arrive at this majority it was necessary for a man to absolutely put his name to the petition to say what was on it was his wish.

154. Where did the petition emanate from?—From the men in the fellmongery.

155. From amongst the men themselves, not introduced from outsiders?—No.

156. You say that some get overtime and some do not. What proportion do not get overtime?—You mean additional pay for overtime?

157. Yes; in excess of the ordinary rates?—We pay extra rate in the freezing-works and the fellmongery for a special class of work.

158. (To Mr. Wynyard) You only do a special class of work?—Yes; for Sunday-morning work and for discharging the mutton into the hulks. Otherwise our pay is the same all through. That is a matter that may be before the Conciliation Board.

159. (To Mr. Carter) You say the hours, Mr. Carter, are from forty down to thirty hours a week?—That is the average.

160. What are the average earnings?—I suppose those in the fellmongery would average about £2 15s. a week.

161. What is about the lowest?—The lowest pay of any man there is, of course, 7s. 6d. a day.

162. That is when they are working full time?—Yes.

163. Of course, you say they do not get full time?—A man is never put on part of the day as a day-man. It applies a great deal to piece-workers. The lowest average in our department