

been in the habit of manufacturing a lot of staves, &c., for Australia, but competition has become so keen for them that to-day, for the first time within the last few years, there is not one solitary order in for a manufacturer in Australia.

227. *The Chairman.*] You think the alteration of hours is going to heavily handicap your industry?—If I was compelled to comply with the number of hours in that Bill I could not comply with my contracts. I could not do it, and would have to stop the works.

Mr. WALTER McLAY, examined. (No. 30.)

In reply to the Chairman's invitation to state his views on the Bill before the Committee, Mr. Walter McLay, representing Messrs. R. Bell and Co., vesta-manufacturers, Wellington, said: As far as the new Act is concerned, Mr. Chairman, it will not affect us much. We pay by piece-work. The forty-seven and a half hours which obtain at present will be reduced to forty-five hours. Then with regard to the engineer we employ for getting up steam in the morning, there is no provision in the Bill for that.

228. *The Chairman.*] When we are dealing with the Bill we will deal with that matter. Is that your only objection?—Yes.

The Committee adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, 22nd August, 1901.

THURSDAY, 22ND AUGUST, 1901.

Mr. WILLIAM DARLOW examined. (No. 31.)

1. *The Chairman.*] I have a letter here from the Christchurch Operative Bootmakers' Society of Workers, stating that you are here to represent them, Mr Darlow?—That is correct, sir.

2. Do you occupy any position in the union?—I am president of the Christchurch Bootmakers' Union at the present time.

3. Will you just give us your views in regard to "The Factories Act, 1901," now before the Committee?—Mr. Chairman, I am here on behalf of the bootmakers of Christchurch, and I am also asked to represent one or two unions in Christchurch on this Bill—the Typographical Association—the executives have given me power to use these names—and the Tinsmiths' and the Plumbers' Unions. The first clause which I wish to bring under the notice of the Committee is with reference to the records and notices kept in factories—clause 17, "In every factory the occupier shall at all times keep or cause to be kept a record showing, with substantial correctness, the names of all persons employed in the factory, together with the respective ages of all such persons who are employed under twenty years of age; the kind of work of each and every person employed in the factory; the earnings paid per week of each person employed in the factory; and such other particulars as are prescribed. He shall at all times cause to be exhibited and maintained in some conspicuous place at or near the entrance of the factory, and in such other parts thereof as the Inspector from time to time directs, and in such a position as to be easily read by the persons employed in the factory, a notice containing the name and address of the Inspector for the district; the name and the address of the medical authority for the district; the official address of the local authority; the holidays and the working-hours of the factory; and such other particulars as are prescribed. If the occupier of a factory makes default in faithfully complying with any of the provisions of this section, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding two pounds for every day such default occurs, after the lapse of seven days from the date on which the factory was first registered." We have come to the conclusion sir, that from the Factories Act point of view the records would be beneficial to the Government and to the country; that we are firmly of opinion that it is a very good clause, and that it should be in the Bill. I will now pass on to clause 18. That is a clause with reference to the hours of labour in factories, viz.: "Subject to the provisions of this Act, a person shall not be employed in or about a factory for more than forty-five hours, excluding meal-times, in any one week, nor for more than eight hours, excluding meal-times, in any one day, nor for more than four hours continuously without an interval of at least one hour for dinner, nor at any time after one o'clock in the afternoon of one working-day in each week as hereinafter mentioned. In the case of females, at any time between the hours of six o'clock in the evening and eight in the morning: Provided that, with the written consent of the Inspector, seven o'clock in the morning may, during such months as are specified in such consent, be substituted in lieu of eight o'clock in the morning, but so that the hours of work are not extended beyond eight hours. In the case of boys under sixteen years of age, at any time between the hours of six o'clock in the evening and a quarter to eight o'clock in the morning. In order to prevent any evasion or avoidance of the foregoing limits of working-hours, all work done by any person employed in a factory for the occupier elsewhere than in the factory (whether the work is or is not connected with the business of the factory) shall be deemed to be done whilst employed in the factory, and the time shall be counted accordingly." I might say, speaking on behalf of the Trades and Labour Council of our town, and for our branches, that this is a clause that we have been fighting for, and have been promised it for a long time. We are of opinion that eight hours is sufficient for any ordinary worker, and that it is a fair day's work. I would like to call under the notice of the Committee that in most of the outdoor trades they are at present working eight hours a day, but the greater portion of the indoor industries are making up the forty-eight hours' work, and some three days' in the week are working the nine hours. We are of opinion that if it is fair and good for the outside worker to only work eight hours a day, it surely must be more beneficial to the man shut up in a close room in the factory to do the same; and we are also of opinion that by knocking off three hours of the week as proposed under this Bill it will not increase the cost of production of the article. With regard to the contention of the manufacturers that by working forty-five instead of