

done. Two days in a week in one particular week will not be any good to the employer or workman. We would suggest an alteration, or that this section of the clause should only refer to young persons and females. Then in section (3) of the clause, "Every person who is employed during such extended hours under this section shall be paid therefor at half as much again as the ordinary rate." We are of opinion, sir, that one-fourth would be quite sufficient in that clause—that time and a quarter would be sufficient penalty for an employer. The next clause I wish to refer to is clause 30—"Holidays in Factories." Now, sir, I want to make myself as plain as I can on this question, and I think I will be able to tell you the feeling of the workers in reference to this clause providing for payment on certain days which are set down as holidays. "Six holidays shall be paid for as holidays." I can assure you, sir, that, speaking for the workers generally, they do not ask for payment for these holidays. We, sir, want a living-wage. We want to have sufficient to live on when we are not working. We do not ask to be paid for the days we do not produce anything. We see the importations coming in, and of course with all these handicaps put on to the employer, it must help to reduce the price of the article, and for that one reason alone we think that payment for these holidays should be struck out of the Bill. They are not asked for as far as Canterbury is concerned—not by one union—and the Trades and Labour Council have come to the conclusion that the workers do not ask for payment on the days on which they do not produce anything. Then with regard to the half-holiday on Saturday afternoons: "A half-holiday on every Saturday from the hour of one o'clock in the afternoon." We claim that if the holiday is good for the shop-assistants that it ought to be as good for those coming under the Factories Act. If a shop opens, it is breaking the law. In factories in Christchurch, especially in boot-factories, they are starting to work the men on Saturday afternoons, and therefore we have not of late had our Saturday afternoon granted as we should have had. We think that half a day should be allowed, and that whatever day it was on there should be no overtime on that particular day. With reference to clause 32: "Wages for each whole or half holiday shall, in the case of each wage-earner, be at the same rate as for ordinary working-days, and shall be paid at the first regular pay-day thereafter. For the purposes of this section, 'wage-earner,' with respect to any specified whole holiday or half-holiday, means any person who is paid by time-wages, whatever the time, and has been employed in the factory for at least twenty days during the six months next preceding the whole holiday, or for at least five days during the month next preceding the half-holiday, whether such employment has been on consecutive days or not, and whether the wage-earner has been continuously in the service of the occupier or not." That applies to the whole. We do not ask for the payment of a half-holiday as set down in this Bill. I take it, as we read it, it means that we should be paid for fifty-two half-holidays for which we do not work. That would mean in regard to our wages, if this Bill came into force, that the employé would not be able to have a reduction of three hours under this Bill. The workers at the present time, if this Bill is passed—saving with regard to the holidays—are prepared to lose the wages. They are so much in earnest on this question of eight hours a day, and which has been before the country so long, that they think it is time it was put on the statute-book, and they are prepared to lose this time with the conviction that they will be able to show the employers that they are not losing anything in this matter. Those are all the clauses we have marked down, sir, and that we may have any objection to. I do not think I will say any more, sir, but to thank the Committee for the attention they have given me, and I shall be glad to answer any questions.

4. *Mr. Collins.*] You know, Mr. Darlow, the scope of this Bill, and what factories would be brought within its operations?—Yes.

5. Knowing the scope of the Bill, do you think it would be possible to leave that clause 18, which you have asked to be left as it stands, do you think it would be possible, or wise, to leave it as it stands, so that the provisions of that clause should apply with equal force to other and more dissimilar industries from those which you represent. For instance, if this Bill were passed as it is now, it would apply to dairy-factories, freezing-works, and fellmongeries, and all such industries, and do you think it would be possible with such industries to leave the clause as it now stands—that not more than eight hours should be worked in any one day, or, when we come to the overtime, that not more than thirty days should be worked in any one year?—Of course I have had a little experience in fellmongeries and that sort of thing. Of course there are very few exceptions where, perhaps, it could not apply to the same as a lot more indoor industries. There are individual cases, and whether it is wise for a few individuals to suffer for the good of the many of course that is for Parliament to say. In my opinion there may be one or two cases, but there are only a very few—wool-scouring, wool-drying, dairying-factories, and freezing-works. There are four or five at the utmost where they could not work under this Bill without any injurious effect.

6. You would then provide for these industries by exempting them from the provisions of the Bill?—If, in the opinion of the Legislature, it is wise.

7. Do you find any great necessity for the alteration of the Act as it stands? Were you under any hardships as workmen at all?—No; under the old Factories Act there is no great hardship. Several clauses in this Bill would be an improvement, and in the others it would be detrimental to us.

8. *Mr. Hutcheson.*] In extension of the question put to you first, Mr. Darlow, by Mr. Collins, do you consider the Bill in itself—that is, the new features of the Bill in general—elastic enough to apply to all trades within the scope of your knowledge?—No.

9. Let me take your attention to clause 18. You notice in section (a), "A person shall not be employed for more than forty-five hours, excluding meal-times, in any one week." That you approve of, and you say that that would be a boon to your trade?—Yes, generally to indoor trades.