

hours, otherwise the stuff would spoil. If the freezing-works are very busy we are very busy, and it would be impossible to get our work through in eight hours. Our seasons are quite dependent on the freezing-works, and do not last for more than six to seven months in a year. About the beginning of the year my men made a demand for higher wages, and I settled the dispute amicably; and one thing I told them was that I should continue to give them as much overtime as possible, because I could appreciate the fact that their seasons are short, and unless they get sufficient overtime during the beginning of the season they would not earn enough to see them through the year.

1. *Mr. Barclay.*] In regard to your industry, Mr. Waymouth, does it go on night and day, or does there come a day when you shut up altogether?—The slaughtering does not go on night and day, but the working of the engine has to go on night and day—a certain portion of the works.

2. As far as this Bill is concerned, are you mainly interested on account of the slaughtering?—It refers to everything.

3. Your objection, then, extends beyond merely the slaughterhouse?—Yes. Take the engineers: they could not work under the terms of this Bill. If we stopped our refrigerator on Saturday we could not open them till 8 o'clock on Mondays; all the meat would have been spoilt.

4. Now, with regard to your slaughtermen, I suppose the times they are employed in any one day are unequal?—Yes.

5. What would be about the maximum number of hours in the slaughterhouse?—In the Arbitration Court the other day we found the average overtime—

6. I mean the ordinary time?—About nine hours and a quarter in the busy season. Now one of my trades is shut down altogether, and another only works three-fourths of the week.

7. Well, then, you say if the hours were confined to eight hours a day that hour and a quarter would bother you: you could not get the work in in the eight hours?—If we were compelled to confine our work to eight hours our butchers could certainly not work more than six. It must take at least two hours to deal with the offal after the other men stop. The butchers could not work more than six hours.

8. In regard to the other employés in the works, Mr. Waymouth, I suppose in regard to these men it would be quite impossible to work them in eight-hour shifts?—There is not enough work to make two shifts.

9. I understand you to say your works go night and day?—Only the freezing portion of it.

10. Do you allow overtime?—Yes.

11. Well, now, I suppose you regard overtime—the general principle of overtime—you do not regard that as work, on account of the inducement that is offered for a man to work overtime?—We prefer to work the men only eight hours, but business will not allow it.

12. The general principle of overtime, you do not regard that with favour?—Oh, no. I prefer to see everybody work their eight hours; but in this case we are peculiarly situated, and the men themselves could not earn a living if confined to eight hours. A farmer has to work from daylight to dark to get his wheat in, and it is the same with the freezing.

13. Of course, you are quite aware that this clause makes no provision as to the hours which the men work; they could work the eight hours in any part of the twenty-four?—Not according to this Act. According to this Act the day's work is from eight to five.

14. But this clause 18, if you will look at subsection (b), says, "for more than eight hours, excluding meal-times, in any one day": do you not understand that to be in one day of eight hours?—The subsequent clause defines what the eight hours shall be.

15. There is nothing in the Act, you say, to prevent your working the men for eight hours at a stretch, night or day?—We could not do that. It would be impossible for us to stop our engines in the middle of one shift for a man to go away home.

16. Have you only one engineer in charge of the engines?—We have nearly twenty. Take my Belfast Works, for instance: there are three firemen, four greasers, and four engineers there in one department.

17. Would it be impossible for any one of these men to sit down and have his dinner?—They do sit down and have their dinners in the engine-room.

18. Would it be impossible for an engineer to take an hour for his dinner if the others were in charge?—It would not be safe. It is the same as a ship at sea: you cannot take your engineers out of the room.

19. Is it not a fact that engines are left in charge of mere attendants?—I have twenty thousand pounds' worth of machinery, and would not leave that in charge of an attendant.

20. Would it be correct to say none of your engines are ever left except in charge of a competent engineer?—They are always left in charge of a competent engineer. I would also point out, what benefit would it be for an engineer who came on duty at 2 o'clock to have an hour off at 4 o'clock in the morning? He brings his supper or breakfast with him, and when he sees that he has got a chance he can go and have a bit to eat and a drink.

21. Could you tell us, Mr. Waymouth, what is charged for slaughtering: you spoke of an advance of 50 per cent. for slaughtering?—We pay the men £1 per hundred.

22. That is, £1 a hundred for sheep. Do you make any distinction for cattle?—We pay £1 a hundred for sheep and 2s. a head for cattle.

23. You mentioned something about the Arbitration Court: had you a case before the Arbitration Court?—Yes; I have had several.

24. You have none on just now?—Yes. They are asking for a rise in their wages.

25. Have you any objection to tell us what your rates of pay are for the men?—Well, they vary to such an extent that I cannot tell you. Our engineers go from about £600 a year downwards.

26. I mean the ordinary run of men?—In the freezing-rooms it is 10½d. an hour, with 1s. an hour overtime, and out of that we allow them half an hour a day for themselves. We pay them for eight hours, and provide them with gloves and washing-money.