

have started loading the train. In a busy day it takes four hours to load the meat for town, as it has to be delivered in a good many places and stored accordingly.

58. Are your men satisfied with the way you are working at present?—I understand they are very well satisfied, and when a similar Bill to this was before the Legislature they waited upon the Government, I think, and asked that they should be allowed to remain as they are. Shortly put, our men earn nine months' wages in six months, and if they earn a good three months' wages in the other six months, it is as much as they do. They do a lot of pick-and-shovel work, painting, road-making, and all that kind of thing. I would like to point out that our headmen are paid by the week, and it is their object to avoid overtime, because they are not paid for it; and that is the reason why we never pay a "dead man" any overtime. My object in that is that he should get his work over as soon as possible. With ordinary work we have only been paying the same rate at night, but have had no object in curtailing—if a man wanted to make a little more in order to make a year's income we are glad to see him make it. If we are to pay a penalty rate we must instruct our men to keep their work, as far as possible, within the limit—eight hours—and the result of that will be we will have to put on more men, and the amount of wages will be divided amongst the greater number of men, and the men will not get such a large income. Supposing the portion of our work that we have to do outside the hours of 8 and 5 would not stand an increase of 50 per cent. without adding very considerably to the cost of the farmer of freezing and getting rid of his stuff—

59. Then, it is the farmer who would suffer?—Yes; because it is solely an export business. You referred to the butcher business; in the busy time it is not a tenth part of our business.

60. You are quite satisfied that under the existing circumstances the men would prefer to earn wages during the six or eight months in the year, in order to keep them for the remainder of the year, than to have shifts and earn less?—I think that they would prefer it. It would be very difficult to arrange the shifts. Supposing to-day there are two hours overtime in the offal and to-morrow there are three hours overtime, the men in charge of the tallow and offal departments go to the foreman in charge in the morning and state they have so many sheep to kill. The men look out their work. Say there would be three or four digesters to fill after 5 o'clock, some of the men are asked to stop; say some of the men object to stop because they stopped the night before: how are you going to make it work?

61. *Mr. Hardy.*] Have you any means of controlling the producers so as to regulate the supply coming in, Mr. Waymouth?—No. I am like the Judge of the Arbitration Court who said he could not regulate the lambing season, nor could he regulate the London market.

62. If you let lambs go beyond a certain time they deteriorate, do they not?—Yes. If we cannot take lambs when the farmers have them ready they are very often not fit to freeze.

63. *Mr. Collins.*] With reference to the particular part of the Bill you have referred to, Mr. Waymouth, do you think that in any way it is detrimental to the employés?—So far as our employés are concerned, they themselves would resist it to the utmost. Under the terms of this Bill they stated in the Arbitration Court they could not make a living.

64. There is no difficulty likely to arise that could not be met by legislation under the methods already existing?—I do not think there is any legislation that could meet the growing exigencies of the trade.

65. Any difficulties which might arise between the employés in your company could be met by the legislative methods already existing by the Arbitration Court?—By the Arbitration Court they could.

66. You want us to understand that your industry stands upon an entirely different footing to those industries to which this class of legislation is held to apply?—That is so.

67. The work is of an intermittent character and subjected to a maximum and minimum of pressure; and, then, of course, it is a perishable product, and it would very likely interfere with the industry itself if it were compelled to adopt rules which would apply to industries of a totally different character?—That is it.

68. *The Chairman.*] You say, Mr. Waymouth, that you protest against the Bill altogether?—That is, so far as it applies to freezing companies.

69. Do you mean to say that you do not care to have your factory inspected and sanitation carried out?—That is already provided for.

70. If in passing this Bill we wipe out all the factory legislation and you ask for your factories not to be placed under this Act, you will be under no legislation at all?—Of course, we are already controlled by the Slaughtering and Inspection Act. You can send as many Inspectors as you like.

71. What about the employment of young people under fourteen and eighteen years of age? They will be swept out by the passing of this Bill if you are exempted?—We could not employ boys under fourteen years of age; they are not strong enough to do the work.

72. Do we take it your objections are mainly confined to the three clauses on which you have given evidence—viz., clauses 18, 19, and 25?—Yes.

73. If you are exempted from the operation of these three clauses you will be satisfied?—Yes.

74. Are all the other employers of the same opinion?—Yes, all employers—if we are excluded from the operation of these three clauses. One of our great troubles is in connection with our employés wanting to get their boys into the works, and it is very often hard to say "No" to a good strong boy. It relieves us of the trouble of having to ascertain these facts.

75. *Mr. Laurensen.*] In view of what has come out, Mr. Waymouth, you point out that if this Act came into force to a very large extent you would be compelled practically to raise your rates about 25 per cent. at the very least?—Yes.

76. At present you pay 2s. for cattle and £1 per hundred for sheep. You say that would fall upon the farmer?—Yes.