

1901.  
NEW ZEALAND.

LABOUR BILLS COMMITTEE:  
REPORT ON THE FACTORIES BILL, TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND APPENDIX.  
(MR. J. A. MILLAR, CHAIRMAN.)

*Report brought up on the 3rd October, 1901, and ordered to be printed.*

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

*Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.*

WEDNESDAY, THE 3RD DAY OF JULY, 1901.

*Ordered*, "That Standing Order No. 211 be suspended, and that a Committee, consisting of thirteen members, be appointed, to whom shall be referred the Factories Bill and certain other Bills more particularly referring to labour; five to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Arnold, Mr. Bollard, Mr. Collins, Mr. Ell, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hutcheson, Mr. Laurensen, Mr. Millar, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Palmer, Captain Russell, Mr. Tanner, and the mover."—(Rt. Hon. R. J. SEDDON.)

WEDNESDAY, THE 10TH DAY OF JULY, 1901.

*Ordered*, "That the name of Mr. Barclay be added to the Labour Bills Committee."—(Rt. Hon. R. J. SEDDON.)

FRIDAY, THE 2ND DAY OF AUGUST, 1901.

*Ordered*, "That the Factories Bill be referred to the Labour Bills Committee."—(Rt. Hon. R. J. SEDDON.)

REPORT.

THE Labour Bills Committee, to whom was referred the Factories Bill, have the honour to report that, having taken a mass of evidence, and bestowed much consideration on the probable operation of the provisions of the said Bill, they recommend that the Bill be allowed to proceed, subject to the amendments shown on a copy of the same attached hereto.

J. A. MILLAR, Chairman.

Parliament Buildings, Wellington, 3rd October, 1901.



## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

(MR. J. A. MILLAR, CHAIRMAN.)

WEDNESDAY, 14TH AUGUST, 1901.

Mr. FREDERICK WAYMOUTH examined. (No. 1.)

In reply to the Chairman, Mr. Waymouth said he had definite instructions to represent the New Zealand Refrigerating Company, at Burnside, Oamaru; the Canterbury Frozen Meat Company, at Belfast and Fairfield; the Christchurch Meat Company, at Islington, Timaru, and Picton; the Frozen Meat Company at the Bluff and Maitāwhiri; the Longburn Freezing-works; and Nelson Brothers, at Tomoana and Gisborne.

*The Chairman:* We will be very pleased, Mr. Waymouth, if you will give us the principal objections you take to the Bill now before the Committee.

*Mr. Waymouth:* The clauses we principally object to are the freezing companies being included under the operations of clauses 18, 19, and 25—viz., Clause 18: "Subject to the provisions of this Act, a person shall not be employed in or about a factory (a) for more than forty-five hours, excluding meal-times, in any one week; nor (b) for more than eight hours, excluding meal-times, in any one day; nor (c) for more than four hours continuously without an interval of at least one hour for dinner; nor (d) at any time after one o'clock in the afternoon of one working-day in each week, as hereinafter mentioned: (e) 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: (f) in the case of boys under sixteen years of age, at any times 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." Clause 19: "The prescribed number of working-hours may from time to time be extended, but not (a) more than three hours in any day, or (b) more than two days in any week, or (c) more than thirty days in any year, or (d) on any holiday or half-holiday. On every such occasion a person shall not be employed more than four hours continuously without having an interval of at least half an hour for rest and refreshment. 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: Provided that when the ordinary rate is by time, and not by piece-work, the overtime rates shall not be less than sixpence per hour for those persons whose ordinary wages do not exceed ten shillings per week, and ninepence per hour for all other persons so employed; and shall be paid at the first regular pay-day thereafter. The occupier of a factory shall at all times keep a record-book, called the 'Overtime-book,' wherein shall be entered a correct record showing in the case of each person who is employed during such extended hours under this section the name of the assistant and the respective dates and periods of such employment. The Overtime-book shall at all times be open to the inspection of the persons employed and of the Inspector. The Inspector may at any time require the occupier to verify the entries in the Overtime-book by statutory declaration in such form as may be prescribed by regulations." Section 2, clause 25, viz: "If the work is done elsewhere than in a registered factory, the occupier of the factory by whom the work was let or given out shall cause to be affixed to each garment or other article upon which the work has been done a label in the prescribed form; and if he makes default in so doing he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one pound for each article whereof the default is made." We would ask the Committee to exclude the freezing companies from the operation of the Act so far as these clauses are concerned. The principal reasons are that it would be impossible for us to carry on our business and comply with these conditions. In the first place, our machinery is like that of a ship at sea—it must be run consecutively for the whole twenty-four hours per day. That work is done by three sets of men working watches of eight hours each. It would be impossible to carry on the business of the freezing companies and comply with the provisions of the Factories Bill. With regard to the shifts of eight hours, it would be impossible to comply with the Saturday half-holiday, or an hour off for dinner. This is impossible, because the men must have their meal in the engine-room during a slack time—just as they can get it. The next point would be as to the uncertainty and irregularity of the supply of stock. We are largely dependent upon the train-services for a supply of stock at the works. The men dealing with the stock have to be on hand at all hours when the railway tells them that trains are arriving with stock, which must be discharged on arrival. When stock does arrive it is killed out on the following day, owing to the fact that almost all the freezing companies holding paddocks have no feed in them; and, even if the owners do not complain, we might get into trouble with the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Take our Canterbury works, for instance: the largest portion of stock coming in arrives at Islington at 7.30 in the evening, and that must be discharged and put into paddocks on arrival. At Belfast the largest proportion of stock arriving there from the north reaches the works at 8 p.m., and has to be discharged and placed in the paddocks for the night. In the same way the stock arriving by road is very frequently interrupted by high rivers and by various other causes.

Wet weather frequently causes stock to travel slowly. Such being the case, the men attending upon the stock must be at call at all hours of the day and night. It is not necessary that they are working all the time, but they must be there to discharge it. This applies practically to all the works in New Zealand where stock arrives by train. Then, with regard to confining the time of work to any particular set of hours: That also would be impossible to carry out in practice owing to the fact that the quantities arriving are largely uncertain. One day at a large works the quantity might amount to 4,500 and the next day to 5,500, or, of course, the variation may not be so great; still, the quantity arriving must be killed outright owing to the fact that almost invariably there is no room in the holding-pens. Frequently the railway telephones that a train is arriving with sheep and the engine will wait while they are discharged. It occasionally occurs when this notification is given that the train is late, and in that case men have to wait. There are different causes of delay, and these are contingencies which have to be faced. With regard to the slaughtermen, they are not always certain of the exact quantity of stock that they expect—some days fewer will arrive than has been intended, and on other days a few more than anticipated. This, of course, causes a daily variation of work all through the works. Then, with regard to rabbits, hares, and fish, which come in at certain times and must be dealt with on the night of arrival owing to the deterioration in the hot weather: These rabbits are caught by the trappers, and have to be sent in to the freezing-works as the train-services permit. In many cases, in the hot weather, if they could not be dealt with as they arrive in the evening they would not be worth doing on the following morning. This would especially apply to the Saturday afternoons, as anything arriving on the Saturday would be worthless on the Monday morning. Then, with regard to the products we deal with, of course sheep and cattle are the principal. Of these, all portions of the animal immediately it is slaughtered are perishable, and it is highly essential in every connection that they shall be promptly and immediately dealt with. If the slaughtermen work their eight hours in a day, the men dealing with the by-products must work longer, as you can quite understand. If the butchers knocked off work at 5 o'clock the men washing down the slaughterhouse take three-quarters of an hour longer. Then, it takes probably from a quarter to half an hour for such by-products as inside fat, the gut, and the skin to reach the department where they are treated. Then it takes from one to two hours to place them in such a condition that they do not deteriorate before the next morning. Such being the case, you will see, if the butchers work their full time, the other men must of necessity work more. Then, with regard to the men working in the freezing-room: They must begin work early in the morning. The first thing they do is to get the cooling-room clear of the sheep slaughtered the previous day before the butchers begin to put the next day's killing into the cooling-room. The mixing of the two would be injurious. The other reason of the men working early in the freezing-chamber is that they have to get the meat loaded, so that it can arrive at port for shipment. If you take the Canterbury works, for instance, our special train leaves Belfast for Lyttelton at 6.15 a.m., so as to enable the men to be at work at 8 o'clock. At Islington the time for the train leaving is about the same. In order that the lumpers at the Port of Lyttelton can carry on their work at reasonable hours our men must work early, so as to let the different parts of the work dovetail together. At open roadsteads and breakwater harbours, where they are liable to sudden changes of the sea and weather, the loading operations have to go on continuously while the ship is at the port. This occurs very frequently at Wanganui, Patea, Waitara, Gisborne, and Napier. The vessels lying in roadsteads are subject to all the conditions of our climate, and it is absolutely necessary, if the work is to be done at all, it should be done promptly. In most of these places the works are a little distance away from the town, and it would be impossible to get sufficient labour to cope with the work when the emergency arises. Then, with regard to the perishable nature of goods and the absolute necessity for the preservation of the products: which also applies to the pig business, in which several of the companies operate together with their other freezing business. The pigs, in the same way as sheep, arrive at certain times, and must be dealt with on arrival, pork deteriorating more rapidly than either mutton or beef. The pig-market causes work for the men on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. After a certain amount of work is done on the Friday it is absolutely necessary an equal amount of work must be done on the Saturday. When the men are working at full time it is impossible to give them a Saturday half-holiday. Occasionally they get a slack end of the week, and then they can manage it. In connection with the overtime, I have recently been twice before the Arbitration Court in Christchurch. In the case of the slaughtermen, they distinctly stated to the Judge that they did not ask for any restriction of hours, beyond that they did not care to work when it could be avoided before 7 in the morning, or after 5 o'clock on Saturday afternoons. That was the only point upon which they asked the Judge to ask the companies and see if that could not be brought about. Also, they did not ask for the increased overtime in the busier season, as they recognised that the mutton trade in Canterbury was like a farmer's harvest, and had to be done at the proper time. They also recognised that the good money they made during the busy season helped them to tide over the slack season. They also stated that unless allowed to make that extra money in the busy season they could not make a living. Similar evidence was given in the fellmongers' dispute. Two witnesses from my works voluntarily went to the Court, and stated that if a restrictive amount of overtime only was allowed for the busy season they could not live. Of course, the whole of the remarks I have made apply equally to the men employed in the fat- or oleo-house. These men especially have to work after the work of the day in the slaughterhouse is completed. The same applied to the men in the gut-house, where the men get the gut. The last does not reach them till 5.30 in the evening. They have to see it properly passed through cold water, and left in such a condition that it will not deteriorate before the next morning. The same applies to the fellmongering; and, in connection with the fellmongering, if the sweating process is used for getting



the wool off the skins the work there is exceptionally uncertain, the men being liable to be called out at any time of the night or day should a change of temperature make it necessary. The sweating process is actually a matter of time and climate. A change to warm weather will frequently make the necessity arise for dealing with two days' skins in one. Frequently the men will be turned out at 1 o'clock in the morning to pull skins which in a steady temperature would not be needed to be pulled until the next day. Of course, in fellmongeries where the skins are "painted" these things do not arise to the same extent as when they are treated under the sweating process. But there are so many exigencies in connection with the skin, which is a very valuable part of the sheep, that a restriction of hours would make the fellmongery trade in the colony connected with the freezing companies absolutely worthless, and the whole process would have to be discontinued and the skins shipped home to England as dry skins. With regard to clause 25, subsection (2), page 11, you will notice it provides, "If the work is done elsewhere than in a registered factory, the occupier of the factory by whom the work was let or given out shall cause to be affixed to each garment or other article upon which the work has been done a label in the prescribed form." Well, in connection with that, most of the freezing companies have their bags made off the premises by their employes' wives, or by what you may term "pensioners." Take my firm, which makes probably seven hundred thousand bags in a year: it would be a piece of nonsense to attach a label to each bag to say it was not made on the company's premises. I think I have said enough to show the Committee that, with the existence of the clauses I have named, it would be impossible for the freezing companies to carry on their businesses with the restrictions that would be made. We would ask the Committee, therefore, to make an exclusion of these clauses in favour of these freezing companies. We have now worked for eighteen years, and always very amicably, with our employes. Our employes know that it is necessary for the work to be done in the season, and if they cannot work long hours during that season they cannot live. Further than that, with regard to the freezing companies, the competition is getting keen, especially with South America. So far as the Canterbury District is concerned, the competition in England is being every year felt more seriously. Restrictive legislation such as this would so seriously hamper the business that I hardly know how we could carry on. It would so seriously hamper the business, I think, that the farmers would probably turn their attention to something else, and the freezing industry would probably dwindle.

Mr. DILNOT SLADDEN examined. (No. 2.)

*Mr. Sladden:* I am going to point out that apart from the freezing-works there are some industries, especially those connected with perishable produce, such as milk, meat, fish, &c., with which it would be difficult to control the hours in the same way as can be done with manufactures generally, or those dealing with non-perishable commodities. At any rate, I feel certain, as has been shown by Mr. Weymouth, that if it is attempted to apply these hard-and-fast regulations the result will certainly be to add to the cost of getting the produce into the markets of the world, and in this way will put an additional load on the producer. To give the Committee some idea of the manner in which the proposed Bill will affect the industry with which I am connected, I will give a rough outline of a summer day's work at the Ngahauranga Freezing-works. After an ordinary day's killing there would be, say, 2,500 sheep and eighty bullocks to be got into the freezing-chambers. In order to do that in time, about 2 a.m. the men would start to load the special train for the Waterloo Quay works, which takes 1,200 sheep. At 4 a.m. they would begin to cut down, quarter, and weigh the beef, which would then be passed into the freezing-chambers at Ngahauranga; following this the remainder of the mutton would go into the freezing-chambers at Ngahauranga, and the whole has to be inside the chambers by 8 a.m. so as to avoid the heat of the day. As it is imperative to get the whole of this in before 8 o'clock it cannot be done without starting work between 2 and 3 in the morning. In addition to this, the wagons for the town trade have to be loaded so as to reach town at the earliest about 6 a.m. and the latest about 7.30 a.m. If a ship is loading, about three trucks—say, a thousand carcasses of frozen mutton—would also have to be loaded in time for the special train, so as to be ready for the wharf-lumpers to commence work on the wharf at 8 a.m. During the day proper—from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.—slaughtering and the work of the collateral industries, dealing with skins, fat, offal, preserving meat, &c., are in full swing, and we prefer, if possible, to finish slaughtering by 5 p.m. Owing, however, partly to the scarcity of railway-trucks, as well as a variety of other causes, it is difficult to regulate the supply of stock as accurately as could be wished, and we are at times overdone for two or three days, and then short of work for a similar period. If it is intended that fifty per cent. more should be paid for stock slaughtered after 5 p.m., the tendency will be at times to hold stock for another day which would be better slaughtered at once. Assuming that the slaughtering, which is work the Committee may have in their minds, is finished at 5 p.m., after that hour the offal has to be put into the digesters, the blood has to be removed, coagulated, and dried, and the inside fat has to be put into cold water, while sheep tongues and other portions of meat for preserving have to be put into pickle. The refuse from the digesters, from which the fat has been drawn, at the end of the day has to be pressed and dried before the men leave the manure-works, as well as the last of the blood; and it would be unwise, for sanitary reasons alone, that obstacles should be thrown in the way of finishing up this work in the most thorough manner. We would have the Health Officer inquiring if we were not going to finish up this work completely before the men knocked off work. We have not been in the habit of paying an extra rate for overtime in the tallow, oleo, or manure departments, the number of men put on and the hours at which they start and leave off work having hitherto been adjusted so as to suit the requirements of the business and to satisfy the men. We pay extra for overtime in the freezing-chambers and also in the fellmongery, although in the latter case not anything like fifty per cent. The hours for fellmongering can be more easily adjusted than those for tallow and manure work—

at any rate, in fellmongeries where the painting process is used, as the chemicals can be mixed of such a strength as to make the skins ready for working at the particular time required. Where, however, the old sweating process is used, which, from some points of view, is the best, men must be turned out to work the skins at any time of the day or night when they are ready. It seems hardly right that work which must inevitably be finished after the main operations are over should be treated, so to speak, as an extra. It should, I think, be recognised that all the necessary work cannot be done simultaneously. I fear that if the Factories Bill be passed in its present form the charges for freezing meat for export will have to be increased. The cost of this work consists mainly of labour, coal being comparatively a small item. Then, with regard to the engineers: At present they work in three eight-hour watches. I hardly think it can have been intended to treat two of these watches as overtime, although that is what the Bill appears to imply. It would, however, certainly prevent the engineer or fireman from taking his dinner or tea with him and eating it, as he does now, in the time for which he is paid. Neither engineers, greasers, nor firemen are constantly at work, and can get plenty of time to eat a meal. I feel quite sure that it is better for them, and that they would prefer to eat their lunch as they can during their eight-hour watch, and have sixteen hours off, than to have a break of an hour, and only fifteen hours off. In addition to this, it would be almost impossible to provide for the break of an hour during the night watches. I cannot see how this part of the work is to be made fit in with a week of forty-five hours. The engineers have never expressed any desire that the system obtaining should be altered. Then, the Bill generally seems to prevent what we have generally been urged to do by the trades and labour representatives, and that is to put on two shifts, where it can be done, in preference to working overtime. If the men do not work too much overtime, they do not ask for more shifts; as I read the Act, they cannot do that. The shift outside the hours of 8 to 5 would be overtime, and extra. I think these are the principal matters to which I wish to draw the attention of the Committee. There seems to be an impression abroad that the hands at freezing-works earn high wages. As a matter of fact, they do not, generally speaking, earn anything more than a moderate wage for the year; but it is correct that they earn the bulk of it—perhaps three-fourths—within six months. Realising the difficulty in such an industry as meat-freezing of providing men with a sufficient yearly income, the management has rather encouraged than otherwise the system by which men have made enough to live upon the whole year by working extra long hours during the few busy months. The men have not been asked to work if they were not inclined, because more men could, of course, have been put on; and the work has really adjusted itself, as I have stated before, to the requirements of the business and also to the satisfaction of those employed. The tendency of any alteration in the direction of the proposed legislation will be to curtail the earnings of the men. There are other matters incident to the business which it would be difficult to reconcile with a day of eight hours or week of forty-five hours, such as the unloading of stock arriving by trains, which come in all hours. Our stock is generally in between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. Then, there is the taking in of butter, rabbits, fish, &c., either for export or local consumption. The difficulty of getting a week's arrivals of stock—say, fifteen thousand or sixteen thousand sheep, and three hundred or four hundred head of cattle—finished exactly at 1 o'clock p.m. on Saturday is almost insuperable. The difficulty of getting casual labour at most freezing-works where ships are being loaded, and the necessity of working at all hours, day and night, when loading in open roadsteads, has also to be considered. The rolling-stock of the Railway Department does not enable us to run the sheep down with great regularity. Our men may have to wait a day or two to send a couple of thousand sheep down from some station. Owing to the loading of sheep in open roadsteads, which has to be carried on at all hours of the night, certain chamber-men have necessarily to be employed.

Mr. EWAN CAMPBELL examined. (No. 3.)

*Mr. Campbell:* What has been said by the two gentlemen who have preceded me really applies to my works; all freezing-works are carried on in much the same way. In my works, at Wanganui, we are rather differently situated as far as getting rid of our produce is concerned. In Wanganui we have to lighter all frozen-meat produce to the open roadstead; and, of course, it is very stormy on the West Coast sometimes, and so when a vessel comes they have to go for their lives to get her loaded. We work all night, and pay the men 1s. 6d. an hour from 8 to 5, and 2s. 6d. an hour afterwards, so that the men are not at all dissatisfied. In fact, it was thought a very great hardship when some of the good people stopped them loading on Sundays; the men made a good thing out of it. They work all night and all day when the ship is there. We are in very much the same position as a ship loading itself. With reference to the half-holiday on Saturday, it would simply mean, as far as our works are concerned, that we would have to knock off on the Friday. To get everything clear at 1 o'clock on Saturday would necessitate leaving off at 5 p.m. on Friday. The offal is generally taken warm from the sheep and put in certain places, and if it is not manipulated on the same evening it is simply ruined; it is a perishable thing. Then, our works have all to be cleaned up after hours; the offal is taken away because it is not allowed to stand there. The whole place is cleaned up.

Mr. MAX EICHELBAUM examined. (No. 4.)

*Mr. Eichelbaum:* People are inclined to look at our industry, as my firm employ about one hundred and fifty men and pay about £10,000 in wages during a period of six months. What applies to the freezing-works applies practically to my business, only my article is very perishable. We cannot take the raw product away until the last sheep is killed. We have to cart it to our house, and have to treat it at once. Runners are a bit "smelly," and unless treated at once it would be a great nuisance. If the freezing-works stopped killing at 5 o'clock, it would take them from 7 to 8 to treat them properly. They have to work sometimes longer and sometimes shorter

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.

27. Your works are at Wanganui, Mr. Campbell?—Yes.
28. Have you any objection to telling us whether they are working out all right, and whether you are satisfied with their working, as far as returns are concerned?—Not this year. We are working at a loss this year.
29. Have they been unsatisfactory for previous years?—For the last two years.
30. You say you pay the men 1s. 6d. an hour from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.?—Yes; that is only for the loading. That is merely working on the lighter. They have to go down into the lighter, and it is all chilled.
31. What would be your rates of pay for the ordinary men, then?—They vary so much. They are paid £1 a hundred for sheep and 2s. 3d. per head for cattle.
32. Then, men work by the hour?—They get 1s. per hour in the chamber, and overtime at the rate of 1s. 6d. per hour.
33. *The Chairman.*] Your men are not so continually employed, Mr. Campbell?—If we put through a hundred thousand we have a certain staff in the works, and if we put through five hundred thousand we have got a staff to cope with it. Generally, our season commences at the end of November, and begins to slacken at the end of April and May. In June there is very little doing. We never shut down, because at the present time we have the butchers for the borough, and therefore any small lot that may come in we get butchers to kill, and therefore carry on.
34. *Mr. Barclay.*] You could not possibly keep all the men on all the year round?—No; we keep as many as we can doing odd jobs. We paint, and do all kinds of things. We do all our own jobs at the works.
35. I suppose if your works were very much larger and there were considerably more men employed it would be very much more difficult to keep them all on?—Yes; I am afraid we will not be able to keep them on now owing to the Conciliation Board decision: it is understood that we cannot paint, and do that sort of thing now.
36. You do not keep going night and day?—Oh, yes.
37. On some parts of the works slaughtering is done?—We would very much prefer that there should be no overtime at all. It is only pressure of work that makes us work overtime.
38. As far as your slaughtering is concerned, you can get it all done in the eight hours?—No, not at times. We are in the same position there as here. We have a private lighter and a Government lighter.
39. You think that you could not get your slaughtering done in the eight hours?—No, certainly not. We have two lighters. The trucks on the railway are very uncertain, and sometimes a butcher might be standing idle waiting for the stuff to come down, and at other times they are greatly pressed.
40. *Mr. Bollard.*] I understand you to say, Mr. Waymouth, that it is utterly impossible to carry on the freezing business, with all the attendant by-products to be worked up, if this Bill is forced upon you?—That is so.
41. Then, the only alternative would be to work in shifts?—We could not work in shifts. There is not enough work for two shifts.
42. Assuming this Act was forced upon you, would it mean your working shifts or closing down?—Yes.
43. If you work shifts it will increase the expenditure?—Undoubtedly.
44. And what would be the effect upon the men?—They would not earn their living.
45. How many months in the year are you busy?—In Canterbury, generally from January to August.
46. The men look forward to make sufficient to keep them for the other months in the year?—Yes; they have eight months work for the twelve months.
47. If you had to work in shifts, have you calculated what the extra expense would be?—No. I would have to go carefully into it.
48. Supposing it cost 25 per cent. more?—It would cost me 25 per cent. more.
49. Who would you make pay?—The farmer would have to pay it. We buy from the farmers and charge them for freezing.
50. *Mr. Bollard.*] You buy from the farmers and freeze on your own account, Mr. Sladden: would that be a fact, you would give the farmers less for their stock?—Yes; if anything is done to increase the cost of freezing it will have to come off the price of the stock—there is not other margin.
51. You supply nearly all the butchers in Wellington from your establishment, do you not?—We supply, I believe, two-fifths of the butchers.
52. The Gear Company, I suppose, supplies some?—A third at least.
53. There are not many butchers killing on their own behalf, are there?—In round figures, there are about a third outside.
54. Could not some of this extra expense be borne by the consumers in the colony?—It is a very small factor in our business—the supplying of Wellington; it is not worth mentioning in connection with the freezing industry.
55. Do I understand you to say in the event of your having to work in shifts that you would be to considerably more expense, and that it is the farmer that would lose?—It is inevitably the farmer who must pay.
56. It is the farmer who pays all?—Who pays the most.
57. If you are compelled to carry out the provisions of this Bill supposing it became law, how would it affect the butchers?—As far as I can see, it would upset their business. They insist on having the last of their meat in the shops by 7.30, and, as I have pointed out, it involves starting pretty early in the morning. We send their meat in by wagon, and the meat for freezing by rail. I think they start loading the butchers' wagons a little after the other men

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.

77. I gather from you that the strongest point you seem to emphasize is this: the men themselves would prefer to have the opportunity of making the overtime rather than having two or three gangs working in shifts, because they cannot earn enough money in eight months to keep them during the twelve months?—Yes.

78. Does the argument you brought forward in connection with the arrival of sheep and perishable products equally apply to people receiving pelts, and that they have to receive those pelts and deal with them immediately?—Yes. The Woolston people get their pelts down in the evening, and the railway tender them, and do the shunting between 10 p.m. and midnight, and the people who receive those pelts have to keep men there to take them out of the train, so that they will have them in the morning.

Mr. WALTER HILL, Fellmonger (representing all tanners and fellmongers in the Christchurch District), Woolston, examined. (No. 5.)

*Mr. Hill:* With regard to the forty-eight hours, we contend that it is not possible to run a fellmongery or a wool-scouring business at certain seasons of the year in forty-eight hours. We are closely allied to the freezing industry, and our business must be run on very similar lines. Our goods are perishable to a very great extent, and, seeing that we get both skins and pelts from the freezing companies, these things must be dealt with, and if we are penalised for overtime it will seriously handicap us, and, of course, make our goods cost more money. The conditions of labour with us should be practically the same as they are with the freezing companies. If penalties are imposed in the way of shorter hours and increased rates for overtime—of course, our competition will be entirely shut out so far as the farmer goes. We shall not be able to compete for his skins, as all these extra demands will mean something like an increase of from 10 to 12 per cent. on our wages-sheet, and we cannot afford then to work the skins; it will result in a loss on the skins by reducing competition, and some £20,000 or £30,000 spent in wages in this direction will be lost to the workers entirely. With this increase, of course, we should not be able to work. Owing to this penalisation we would probably buy at a nominal rate and ship to London in a dried state. Some of us would be compelled to stop on in the trade, but we should not be employing the labour we are doing to-day. The works would be only partially employed during the rush of the season, which in the busiest time is from November to April. I am dealing with fellmongering, which has its busy and slack times, the same as the freezing companies—we are busy when the freezing companies are busy. With fellmongering our busy and slack seasons are more in accordance with the freezing companies. When they are freezing and shipping we are likely to get a lot of skins, and we can only get skins from the freezing-works after they have killed the sheep. I have skins sent from Belfast, and get them at Woolston at all hours up to 11.30 p.m. The Railway Department cannot push them along, because the trains bringing some of them have to wait for the shunting, and, being boat trains, cannot be delayed. They must be dealt with, and if left in the trucks all night the pelts would be worth next to nothing in the morning. We should lose a big percentage, too, in wool. I have men who do not complain to go and do this, because it finds them in work the next day. If we are compelled to work the forty-five hours, as this Bill proposes, I do not see how we could possibly do it if men are not allowed to work overtime, and it is practically illegal to work overtime under this Bill. And if we have to make application to an Inspector to be allowed to work, it is impracticable—we often do not know an hour beforehand that we shall require these men—and if we have to stop at 1 o'clock on Saturday, that would mean that there are some parts of our business which we could not work on Saturdays. We should have to let Saturday slide; also because there are a number of our men who could not work on the Monday because the other men did not work on the Saturday. It would practically break up the routine of our business. If we saw a decent margin of profit we might put on a rush of men—That is not a satisfactory state of things. It has always been my endeavour to get the men to do the work within the regulated number of hours. I have never had a complaint about working overtime. Then, with regard to wool-scouring, the season for wool-scouring is in the months November to March. We are dependent on the shearing. After wool is shorn we begin to buy wool for scouring. Then the men must avail themselves of every hour of fine weather, no matter whether it is morning or evening, and if they do not do this, and they are compelled to roll up the sheets—and there are often times when an hour in the morning is the best hour of the day—our drying would be delayed, and consequently increased and a less quantity put through—it would be a loss to the worker. On Saturdays it would not be worth the wool-scourers while opening up the sheets—that is in nine Saturdays out of ten. It would considerably increase the cost of scouring, if it is possible to do it, and the margin between scouring the wool here and shipping it in its greasy state is not sufficient to allow of any increase whatever. Those people getting perhaps 1d. per pound for scouring could not possibly get 1½d. if this Bill came into force. Consequently, all that labour would be lost, and the wool would be shipped in the greasy state. I am speaking from a local buyer's point of view. From a foreign buyer's point of view it might be an advantage if you shut up every wool-scouring place in New Zealand. I have bought from ten to twenty-five thousand bales of wool in a year. I scour, of greasy wool, from one to two thousand bales. I do not improve the wool by scouring. I could ship it in the grease without any detriment to it; but these one to two thousand bales I have been scouring are in a very dirty condition. With regard to the dirty wool, by taking out the dirt the saving in freight has enabled me to pay a scouring-wage. In many tests I have tried it has cost me more to scour the wool than I have saved on freight. On the other hand, it has enabled me to buy wool which, if not scoured, I should have been unable to touch.

79. *Mr. Hardy.*] The farmers can sell their clean wool, and sell the dirty wool as well?—Yes. It does not matter which way you take it, the farmer has got to pay it. If I buy a skin and you penalise me I will take it out of the man who has got the skin to sell, or I will not do the business. You do not expect me to come here and bring money and throw it away. I have got to see a result or I do not come. I dare say I could prove, if necessary, that I come here and pay a price



to the farmer for skins and wool, and in the majority of cases he makes 5 per cent. more by selling to me than he would by sending to London. I can ship cheaper than he can. I can save charges which he has to pay. I have no 2½ per cent. commissions to pay; no London charges. I buy the wool myself, and my expenses are scarcely a fraction per cent. I ship my wool and land it in our own store cheaper than he can put it on a wharf in London. I come here and give him that difference, and he gets it every time. During the ten years I have been buying wool in New Zealand—if I had left it alone I would have been thousands of pounds better off. Still, it suits our business to buy forward. If buying here to-day I cable Home, my people sell on the basis I bought at, and, if selling, they cable me, and I buy on the same basis. I had three months in the year for wool business and nine months with nothing to do. I persuaded my people to allow me to buy skins and dirty, unsightly wool, which I otherwise would not have touched. The wool is better for being scoured here. When sent Home dirty it comes out very unsatisfactorily. With regard to tanners, tanners at present are handicapped by the prices of their own material being ruled by outside influence. We cannot buy at our own price. There are always buyers waiting in this market ready to come in if the price of hides or pelts should come in at the prices they want. They export to Europe and America. We are also at a disadvantage so far as Australia goes; they have got lower wages, and they have got a better climate. They have got their tanning materials at hand, and we have to import all ours and pay the duty and other charges, and the cost of leather to the New Zealand tanner is from 2d. to 3d. more than to the Australian tanner; the duty is only 1d. to 2d. I believe if the Australian tanner was to send his leather into this market he could cut us out on most lines. If we have to pay increased charges we have got to buy better, and we have got to take that out of the farmer—or the man who has got the bulk before we get it—and it comes back eventually to the man who grows the stock. I suppose, with the business which we represent, there is perhaps an invested capital of from £100,000 to £200,000. The industry is paying in wages from £30,000 to £50,000 a year, and if this Bill becomes law that amount will be reduced to perhaps £5,000.

80. *The Chairman.*] Will you tell us your opposition to the particular portions of the Bill to which you object, or are you speaking against the Bill as a whole?—As a whole. When I have treated with the hours of work, the penalised overtime, and the holidays I have spoken about everything which can affect us. I do not say there are not any other objections to it. So far as sanitation goes, I think we ought to keep our works in a perfectly sanitary state. I only treat with clauses 18, 19, 30, 32, and 35.

81. Your opposition is mainly directed against them?—Yes.

82. Look at the very last passage in the Bill: you will see that this schedule repeals all the previous factory legislation, so that if this Bill is dropped the others remain?—I have not objection to the others.

83. You are prepared to admit all the holidays?—I have not found them affect me, and I am satisfied. But with this Bill I do say it will be almost an impossibility to conduct business. Though I have one of the most complete plants erected, within four years, I am quite prepared to invest English money if we can get a decent profit. We have not made 5 per cent. since we put it down, but we are satisfied.

Mr. W. H. CLARK, Fellmonger, Woolston, examined. (No. 6.)

*Mr. Clark:* I represent the local industry together with Mr. Hill. I am entirely dependent on the scouring here, and if this Bill becomes law it would really mean I should have to give, say, ¼d. per pound less for my wool, which would come out of the farmers' pocket, or the wool would be shipped in the grease. I have to compete with the English buyer, who buys this wool and ships it direct to London in the grease. If I endeavour to buy at a lower price it practically puts me out of the market. At my particular works at Woolston I do a very large wool-scouring business, and employ from twenty to twenty-five men on the drying-green, and unless we can avail ourselves of all the drying weather it would be impossible to carry on the business, and these twenty-five men would lose their work. On Saturday, say, it takes about two hours in the morning to open out in order to dry, and likewise about the same time to wrap up again the sheets. The consequence would be that it would be impossible to start in the morning, because by the time they had unrolled it would be time to wrap up again, and all that time would be lost. If this Bill became law we could not employ these men on Saturdays, and that would seriously interfere with the other parts of the work. To dry by machinery is not practicable; the business could not be done. The wool-scouring business has to be done in about four months in the year. During these four months I employ about seventy men at Woolston, after which the wool-scouring is over, and we are reduced down to about ten or twelve for the balance of the year.

84. *The Chairman.*] What is the position of these men during the off-season?—They have to find work where they can.

85. You do not claim they earn enough to keep them for the other part of the year?—No.

86. *Mr. Hardy.*] You have shipped wool to England?—Yes.

87. How do your charges compare in New Zealand to those in London?—For the last ten years we should have been better if we had left New Zealand alone.

88. Take this year?—So far as this year goes the wool trade has been in a moribund condition. We are 20 per cent. worse to-day than we were twelve months ago, and from 40 to 60 per cent. worse than twenty months ago.

89. If purchasing wool now, of course, you would save a considerable amount?—No, I do not know that I should. The confidence of the English manufacturer is practically dead.

90. Supposing you wanted wool and were purchasing wool in London, you would save the trouble of buying in New Zealand?—We can buy cheaper to-day in London than we can in New Zealand; the relative prices are dearer here.

91. *Mr. Arnold.*] Do you employ any boy labour?—Oh, we employ one or two for piece-pulling—that is, pulling the wool off pieces we trim off skins.

92. You do not object to this Act as far as it applies to the boys?—No.

93. What wages are paid usually in the trade?—Well, for an adult labourer we pay from 6s. to 11s. a day.

94. That is for eight hours?—For forty-eight hours a week.

95. So far as the overtime is concerned, are they paid for that?—They are paid just the ordinary rates.

96. Do your men have complaints about that? Have they asked for extra for overtime?—I have never had a complaint except through a union, and I have not had a complaint from a number of or an individual of my own men.

97. Have you an award you are working under?—We are to have one published to-day.

98. You do not know whether that award will provide for extra wages?—We do not know.

99. The recommendation of the Conciliation Board provided for that, did it not?—Yes.

100. Your objections to this Bill are only as applies to your own calling: you think that you should be exempt?—Yes; as being allied to the freezing industry, and owing to the perishable nature of the goods that we have got to deal with, and the limited time that we have to deal with them in.

101. *Mr. Bollard.*] I think you said, in the event of this Bill being made to apply to your business, it simply meant the skins would be dried and sent out of the colony?—Yes. At the present time I do not think there is a skin treated in the Argentine and very few in Australia, and I do not see why the same thing should not happen here.

102. That would mean that a large number of labourers engaged in the business would be thrown out of employment?—No.

103. You were before the Arbitration Court the other day?—Yes.

104. And were told by some witnesses that in order to give your employes more wages you should give less for your skins?—Yes, they told us that.

105. You know, as a matter of fact, that the principal value of the skin is the wool at the present time?—Taking a green skin to-day, the pelt is worth almost as much as the wool.

106. It ought not to be so?—Yes.

107. Wool is not paying at the present time?—A man cannot grow sheep to-day and sell his skins at 2s. 6d.

108. *Mr. Laurensen.*] How many people do you employ, Mr. Hill, when you are busy?—As many as a hundred and fifty.

109. You said your wages ran from £30,000 to £50,000?—This is paid in the industry generally. My own wages, from £7,000 to £10,000 a year.

110. You are an employer and pretty much in the same way as the freezing companies. Your employes depend in the busy season on making sufficient money so as to tide them over the slack season?—To some extent, but not to the same extent. We seldom come to a dead-stop. There are other sources, such as farmers' dried skins and butchers' skins, which we always get a few of. In the freezing season we put on increased staffs of men, but it is expected that the workmen we keep on throughout the whole year will do the major part of the overtime, and it is a direct gain to them, and they seem to be rather in favour of it than of putting on extra men.

111. You say that pelts and things like that which come down from Christchurch cannot be run on the Lyttelton line only by certain trains, you have to get the railway to shunt them?—They will not bring them by boat-trains; and they tell me they are doing a favour by bringing them down at all when there are no goods-trains running.

112. If this Act came into force it would add so much to the cost of wool-scouring that almost the whole of the wool would be shipped in the grease, and that would mean the farmers who sell to you would lose about 5 per cent. more than they ought, and a large number of men would be thrown out of employment?—The whole of the wool-scouring would be killed. Farmers cannot afford to pay more for scouring now, and the wool-scourer cannot afford to pay any increased cost.

113. *The Chairman.*] What would be the effect on the labour-market in that industry generally if, by any means of legislative pressure or otherwise, you are compelled to employ at different times and intermittently a much larger number of men than you employ now, with the result of having a much larger portion of them out during a considerable portion of the year?—I should think it would be unsatisfactory, because if I do anything at all under the ordinary hours of this Bill I must increase my staff. Take one branch of the trade: I have got to employ six or seven pullers. We try every day in the week to keep those men going until 5 o'clock. Some days the "painters" will get a little bit ahead of them and give them an hour's overtime, and on another day give them an hour short. I should pay these men off and send them home on the days the "painters" were not giving them full work; on other days we might ask these men to work a couple of hours' overtime. I might put extra men on to finish at 3 o'clock. The casual men would get the work, and the ordinary men would think they were being robbed of their overtime. We should make them all casual hands.

114. *Captain Russell.*] Did I understand you to say that, as far as you could see, the only method of increasing the wages would be to reduce the price you gave for the skins?—Yes.

115. Unless you gave a fair price you would get no skins to buy at any price?—No; I could not expect it.

THURSDAY, 15TH AUGUST, 1901.

Mr. PETER HUTSON, Wellington, examined. (No. 7.)

The Chairman called on Mr. Peter Hutson, as representing the Industrial Corporation of New Zealand, to give his views on the Bill before the Committee.

*Mr. Hutson.* Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, I appear here this morning on behalf of the Industrial Corporation of New Zealand, and also the Industrial Association of Wellington. With



me is associated Mr. Booth, of Christchurch, who also represents the Christchurch Industrial Association. In the interest of the industries of the colony the Industrial Associations cannot agree to the Factories Act as now framed, for the following reasons: First, it will seriously affect the cost of the production of the different classes of articles now made in the colony, and if the proposed Act is made law it will certainly be the means of stopping any more capital being invested in any new industry. Second, no one at present engaged in the manufacture of any goods that are also imported will be able to compete against the imported goods, and, in our opinion, if the proposed drastic alterations to the present factories are made law it will be the means of closing down a great many of our industries. Third, our association cannot think that the present amended Act has been seriously thought out by the Government, for it cannot possibly be in the interests of the working-classes that it has been drawn up, for do we not every day hear evidence before the Conciliation and Arbitration Courts about the increased cost of living. And may I ask, what is the cause of this extra cost of the necessaries of life but the increased cost of production? And the more restrictions that are inflicted on the manufacturers in the matter of shorter hours of labour, and higher rates of wages, so will the necessaries of life become dearer to all classes of the community, and the working-class will be in a far worse position in the future than now; but if the Government insist on the Act becoming law we trust it will reconstruct the Bill so that it may be made workable to the different classes of industries now being carried on in the colony. My association have drawn up different clauses which we think would be far better for both the employés and the employer than those at present before us. The Corporation and the Industrial Association differ a little in the lines that have been drawn up between us, but they are all bearing on the same point in respect to the hours of labour, the overtime, and the amount of holidays, which we consider will injure a great many of our industries. Referring to the Act, clause 18, our association object to the forty-five hours of labour, and they respectfully ask that in section (a) of clause 18, page 7, that "forty-five hours" shall be altered, including meal-times, to "forty-eight hours," making a full week, which we have been fighting for for years—namely, eight hours per day; and we also ask in section (b), where it says that it shall be eight hours, excluding meal-time, in any one day, may be inserted "eight hours and a half." In section (c) it says, "for more than four hours continuously without an hour for dinner." We ask that this be altered to "five," for this reason: Under this Bill it is proposed that there shall be forty-five hours a week, and also that you shall not work more than five hours without rest or refreshment. I do not know how we are going to work Saturday in with these hours. In clause 19 we ask that it shall not apply to male adults, for the simple reason that it is a matter of impossibility to carry on industries in the hours stipulated there for overtime. There are other trades, gentlemen, that you know that we are dependent upon, such as repairs, breakdowns, and in the case of a job going on continually until it is finished; and nearly every one of our industries is affected. Therefore you must see with any serious breakdowns and your conditions of overtime as laid down in this Bill gives us no opportunity of carrying on continually. The Bill states "not more than three hours in any day," or "more than two days in any week," or "more than thirty days in any year." That, gentlemen, would be a disaster to us in the case of any necessary repairs in breakdowns. We ask that this clause be struck out altogether; we could not carry on under it. Having to speak again as an employer I will then be able to state all the different industries that will be affected by payment for these extra hours and in cases of emergencies. The Canterbury section of the industries are on something like similar terms. I attended last Friday night to meet the Corporation there, and this report I hold in my hand was put in and printed in all the Canterbury newspapers. Most of the members of Canterbury themselves have seen it and approve of it. This is the report: "To the chairman of the Canterbury Industrial Association,—We beg to report that your Bills Committee met on Monday, the 5th August, and considered the Factories Bill now before the House, and make the following suggestions of alterations in the Bill for the consideration of members:—Clause 6, subsection 5: We think that the principle of introducing other persons than the Inspector into a factory is not conducive to its peaceful working, and therefore suggest, if it is necessary, that 'any other person' read 'constable, officer of the local authority, or Stipendiary Magistrate.' Clause 18, subsection (a): We suggest that 'forty-five hours' read 'forty-eight hours,' for these reasons: Forty-eight hours is a reasonable working-time. Forty-eight hours is less than is worked in any competing country. At some seasons of the year the work cannot be done in the time. The necessary work cannot be done in the time at same cost. The hands in a factory cannot be increased without outlay for building, plant, tools, &c., on which increased expenses must be made; and, further, expense for motive-power will be increased to turn out the same quantity of work. Employers cannot thus increase hands to cope with work at busy times without dispensing with a number at slack times. This is not favourable to employés. All these items mean increased cost to consumer, who, therefore, either buys a less number of articles or does without. It also places our industries on a reduced ability to cope with foreigners. If forty-four hours is made usual for factory-hands, hands working in the country will also demand less hours, which will, when added to increased cost of colonial-made manufactures, seriously handicap the great producing-classes. Section (b): We suggest 'eight hours and a half' instead of 'eight.' Section (c): We suggest 'five' instead of 'four.' Clause 19, section 1, (b): 'Two' days should read 'four.' Section (c): 'Thirty' days should read 'sixty.' There are seasonable trades in which overtime is unavoidable, else the work cannot be done. Trade will therefore be lost to the country, and the cost of manufacturing will be increased to the consumers' detriment. Section (3): The rate of increased pay for overtime should, we think, be left to the Arbitration Court to decide for each trade on its merits. Clause 21, subsection (3): To provide a dining-room for as few as four hands will be very hard on small employers, and give large concerns still greater advantages. Clause 28, subsection (3): Add to clause 'except when all employés agree

that wages shall be paid fortnightly.' Clauses 30 and 32: These clauses mean an additional tax on manufacturers of 12 per cent. added to the cost of labour, which in many industries in New Zealand will prevent a profit being made, and will cripple all. It will mean largely increased importations. It will be very unfair to those employers who have been recently before the Arbitration Court, and, on the basis of these holidays not having to be paid for, have had awards made extending over a considerable period. It will mean increased work for the Arbitration Court, as employers will have to apply for a reduction in wages to enable these holidays to be paid for. Clause 33: We would point out that these clauses, as carried out to the letter of the Act, would involve conditions almost impossible to be carried out, or at such addition to capital as few industries can stand. These clauses, if rigidly enforced by any Inspector, would mean the closing for a considerable time of many works. It is too much power to put into any one man's hands, and at least an appeal to the Chief Inspector should be allowed. At the present time, although careful and strict where it is necessary, the Inspectors carry out the present Act in its spirit and not in its strict letter, and all sections of the community are satisfied. Clauses 34 and 35: What constitutes default should be made clearer; if something else than refusal to carry out the instructions of the Inspector, these two clauses are too penal, and place a responsibility on the employer he should not carry."

Mr. ALEXANDER VEITCH, Wellington, examined. (No. 8.)

*Mr. Veitch:* Mr. Chairman and gentlemen,—As representing the Wellington Employers' Association, and knowing the views of other associations throughout the colony, this small deputation here this morning will indicate the widespread dismay which has been caused by the introduction of this Bill. There are employers from every part of the colony here, from the north to the south, and yesterday, I think, there were some here who ought to have been able to go back home to-day. We could have had a very much larger number here, but probably you do not want to see more than we have here at the present at one time. As to the views of my association with regard to this Bill, it is considered that the provisions affecting the employment of males are entirely unnecessary; indeed, they are highly mischievous. It might be necessary to provide for the protection of women and young persons, and to limit their hours of employment; but with regard to male adults it is quite unnecessary, seeing that we have the machinery of the Conciliation Board and Arbitration Court to regulate these things. Indeed, it will be found, in looking up awards which have been made by the Arbitration Courts, that the hours in many and most cases, I think, are in excess of the hours provided for in this Bill, and other provisions are less strict than in this Bill with regard to the employment of males. It must not be forgotten that the Arbitration Court and Conciliation Board have spent a very great deal of time and given great attention to these matters. They have inquired into the necessities in these industrial disputes that have been before them, and after all this careful inquiry they, in most cases, permit the working of longer hours than this Bill allows. There are many things in the Bill which I will leave others to direct attention to. There is one thing, however, which I might refer to. I think the Bill provides that on Saturday afternoon no work shall be done. You can imagine in many factories how that would affect the industry. I think the Gas Company would be a factory under the Act. Shall we be without light on a Saturday because it will be illegal to employ men? I shall not take up the Committee's time longer, seeing there are so many here who wish to speak. Mr. Booth, who represents the Canterbury Employers' Association, is here, and probably you will permit him to give the views of his association.

Mr. G. T. BOOTH, Canterbury, examined. (No. 9.)

*Mr. Booth:* I think I can summarise in a very few minutes what the Canterbury Employers' Association as a body wishes to say in respect to the proposed measure. I will begin by stating that the Canterbury Employers' Association is a somewhat important organization, comprising as it does nearly all, if not all, the manufacturing industries and employing trades in the District of Canterbury. The first thing we wish to put before the Committee is that existing legislation, in the shape of "The Factories Act, 1894," with its amendments, and certain other Acts specially dealing with the employment of women and children, affords the workers sufficient protection, or as much protection as it is possible to give them by general legislation. The Factories Act has borne rather hardly upon some industries, but adjustments have taken place, and at present things are working fairly smoothly in accordance with the Act and its amendments. We therefore submit that no further legislation is needed, although there, of course, could be no objection to a consolidation of the present Acts for the purpose of simplification. We wish to say, further, that if this is not the case, if the workers do require consideration beyond what the Legislature has given them in the shape of these various Acts, if the workers engaged in any particular trade or locality require special protection, they have the Boards of Conciliation and the Court of Arbitration set up to consider any appeals they may wish to make. So far as the Boards of Conciliation are concerned, there is some difference of opinion as to their efficiency; but as to the Court of Arbitration, there is no doubt that it is a thoroughly competent Court. The members are thoroughly qualified to deal with matters coming within their jurisdiction, and the jurisdiction of the Court is wide enough to cover all the ground. The Court makes it its business to inquire closely and exhaustively into all the conditions prevailing in a particular trade, or in a particular locality, and after such exhaustive examination gives an award which is as nearly as possible just and equitable as between the parties. The proposed Factories Act will have the effect of reducing the jurisdiction of the Court of Arbitration, inasmuch as the questions of hours, rates of overtime, and holidays are

proposed to be dealt with in a general way by legislation; and we are of opinion that the Court is better able to judge on these points, having a full knowledge of the circumstances connected with each trade, than is possible to the general legislative body. In fact, the removal of this matter from the jurisdiction of the Court would to a large extent stultify it, and impair the efficiency of its operations. I think it is the general opinion throughout the colony that the Court conducts its operations very well. With regard to the general condition of industries throughout the District of Canterbury, I have to say that they are not so flourishing as to be capable of bearing heavy additional burdens, and this Bill undoubtedly proposes to hamper industries to a very large extent. The payment of wages for holidays when no work is being done alone would cause a great addition to manufacturing-costs. The restriction of hours and the overtime would have the same effect. I submit to the Committee the industries of Canterbury and the colony are not capable of carrying this increased burden. You have probably heard more than once prognostications of disaster to various industries in consequence of drastic labour legislation, and although too much may have been said at various times—that this and that factory will close up, and this and that industry will be ruined—the fact remains that many industries in the colony are being carried on with very considerable difficulty, particularly those industries engaged in manufacturing goods which have to be sold subject to foreign competition. We have adapted ourselves to the existing legislation to a considerable extent, and the industries are working along well, but we are not so prosperous as some believe. The great majority of the industries are struggling, and a slight increase in their burdens would cause a diminution in the amount of work carried on, which will act prejudicially to the workmen themselves. If this Bill comes into effect in the shape in which it at present exists, no less than fifty per cent. of the men now employed in many of the manufacturing industries in the colony will be out of work. The effect of measures which will prejudice industries will be detrimental not only to the employers, but will tend to throw workers out of employment, and some of our industries will be extinguished. Shortly put, what our Canterbury Employers' Association wishes to urge is that the Bill, so far as it introduces new matter, should be thrown out altogether. There is plenty of legislation in existence at present, and for such cases as are not already provided for the Court of Arbitration provides all that is necessary.

Mr. J. C. MACKY, Auckland, examined. (No. 10.)

*Mr. Macky*: I wish to say a few words, Mr. Chairman, to express the views of the Employers' Association in Auckland. Our association comprises nearly all the industries in Auckland, which are very important and very valuable. We had a meeting of the manufacturers and employers of Auckland shortly before we left, and the opinion of all present was expressed clearly and forcibly that this proposed Bill—this Factories Bill—would be the most serious legislation that has ever been thought of in New Zealand, and it would have a detrimental effect on both the men and the masters in our district. I am here to say very much the same as Mr. Booth, of Christchurch, has said. Our industries in Auckland are declining; some are paying very small dividends, and some none at all. The industries are struggling on, and if this last blow comes a great many of our industries will have to close down and cease altogether. Now, we say that the industries in Auckland are very important. We gave you the list of them. We represent the Sawmillers' Association, the boot-makers, the tanners, the shirt-manufacturers, the clothing-manufacturers, the builders and the ship-builders, the engineers, the iron- and brass-founders, the tinsmith-workers, the woollen-mills, the paper-mills, the flour-mills, the sugar-mills, the tinned-meat manufacturers, the biscuit-manufacturers, the printers and binders, the brush-makers, the saddlers, and laundries. These are not all the manufactures of Auckland. These are all prepared to say this new Factories Bill will do great damage to both the masters and men. We reckon in Auckland we employ at least five thousand hands; that we pay in wages annually at least £250,000; that our plant is worth at least £850,000; and the weekly wages we pay amount to about £5,000. This outlay, summarily put into figures, means that the weekly hours of work now run from forty-six to fifty and fifty-two, and the average is forty-eight. A reduction to forty-four hours means a reduction of  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. The loss therefore through this Bill, taking the lowest estimate, means on wages four hours per week, which means four weeks and a half per annum at £5,000—£22,500; and on wages through these holidays being paid for—to the men only—it means a loss of £3,000. In one industry alone these holidays mean £1,500. On plant the £850,000 produces, say, £85,000, and a loss of  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on that, totals £7,225; or we have a total loss through the Bill of £32,725. I say the struggling industries of Auckland cannot stand that; the industries only pay 5 and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. In Auckland we have got to compete with the outside world. We are trying to do an island trade in timber, biscuits, produce generally, and all sorts of things; and with these short hours it is impossible to compete with places like America, where they are working fifty-nine and sixty hours, with a magnificent plant, and turning out their stuff far quicker. We have got to send our timber out, and generally to Australia, and to send produce, biscuits, &c., down to the islands. We cannot live and do it. There are four of us who have been sent down from Auckland to try and do our best to convince this Committee and the House that this legislation will be very injurious indeed to the men and the masters both. We do not say we want to see the men getting less wages, as prosperity to the men means prosperity to the colony. We are anxious to see the best wages paid. We have got to a straining-point which if we go beyond means disaster to us and to the colony generally. We want wages to be paid. The evidence which will be given will show how close the thing is cut, and how serious the matter is. The evidence to be given of the different industries will give you exactly the position.

Mr. THOMAS HENRY WHITE, Manager of the Kauri Timber Company's Auckland Mills, examined. (No. 11.)

*Mr. White*: I have some figures here, Mr. Chairman, which show that in our country mills they are working fifty-two hours per week, and in our town mills forty-seven hours per week. We

pay for forty-eight hours although we only work for the forty-seven hours. The Act proposes to reduce the hours to forty-four, and in the towns we are not allowed to work after 1 o'clock on Saturdays; consequently we cannot work forty-five hours; it will be forty-four, and we will have to base our calculations on forty-four. Clause 19 says we are not allowed to work overtime on a half-holiday. In a big mill like ours we have to employ at least twenty men cleaning out the mill in order to start the men on Monday mornings. If this Act becomes law we cannot clean out our mill Saturday afternoons, and will have to start at 10 o'clock in the morning. It will be better not to on work at all on Saturdays, and only work the forty hours per week. That, of course, would be a great loss. The Bill provides that there is only to be six hours' overtime per week. If we have to work overtime at all we have to pay time and a-quarter. Frequently, if an island boat comes in, we get from five to six hours to load in, and then the men have to work overtime; or it may be two or three hours only, the boat having to leave again. According to this new Act, that working overtime would be impossible—the men would have to get an hour for tea between 5 and 6 and start again at 6. With regard to the payment for holidays—clause 32—that would mean, as far as my own particular branch is concerned, £482. Speaking of the Auckland branch of the Kauri Timber Company, if we paid for six holidays £482 that would be for work not done. At present it has cost our company  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to insure our employés. In addition to that, I find in the new Act there is a penalty for another £100, which we think is unfair. We are coming into competition very much with the American people, and from my own knowledge the hours I worked in America were from sixty to sixty-six hours per week, and I know from experience they can turn out their stuff considerably cheaper than we can. I find, according to the Year-book, the timber imported amounted to £83,000; and a good deal of this timber is imported by the Government themselves. In driving through the country we see many sleepers and other timber which is imported from Australia. We thought that for cheapness and quality kauri had no superior, but find in Australia lots of cheaper lines that can do the work as well. This is the Kauri Company only I have spoken of. In addition to representing that company, in connection with Mr. Goldie I also represent the Auckland Sawmillers' Association. In the Kauri Timber Company we pay in wages in the city £480 weekly, and in the country £900. We work in the city mills forty-seven hours per week and in the country mills fifty-two hours. The loss through the Factories Bill on holidays would be £1,380—six days. The loss of hours in the city would be three hours per week, equalling three weeks and a half at £480—£1,680. Then take eight hours off the fifty-two in the country, reducing it to forty-four, and which is equal to nine weeks of the year at £900, equals £8,100. The loss on the plant, which produces £15,800 per annum, is £1,580. This new Bill means a loss of 8 per cent., or a total loss per annum of £12,740. It would mean even a greater loss than this, as, on account of clearing up *débris* and overtime being paid at time and a half, we would have to close altogether on Saturday, and reduce the hours to forty. That is the Kauri Timber Company. With regard to the Auckland Sawmillers' Association, the value of the running plant is £69,000, and they pay in wages per annum £49,900; they pay in wages £998 per week and work at present forty-seven hours. The summary of loss through the Factories Bill is—holidays, six days, equal to one week, £998; and the loss of hours, three hours per week, equals three weeks and a half in the year, at £998—£3,493. The loss on use of plant produces, say, 10 per cent., equal to £6,900, and the loss of  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on that equals £448—or a total loss to the Aucklanders of £4,939. I might also show we manufacture a considerable amount of joinery; and this is a letter sent to us from a firm of manufacturers in America, showing how they can land the stuff here cheaper than we can make it. Although there is a 2s. duty on a door we charge 11s. 6d. for, it can be landed in Auckland for 9s. 6d.; another door can be landed at 8s. 3d., for which we charge 11s. 6d.; another at 9s. 3d., for which we charge 12s.; another at 10s. 9d., for which we charge 15s.; another at 14s., for which we charge 16s. 3d.; and so on. The last time I was in San Francisco I was at a sash-and-door company which manufactured these doors. These were generally exported out of the country. During the last fight we had with the Conciliation Board this is a letter which was sent to me. It came to me from the manager of the New Zealand Pine Company, which has started cutting timber at the Bay of Islands. Here is a portion of the letter. He said: "It would be as well to inform the Conciliation Board the disadvantages the kauri-mills, that cut for export, have to contend with in Australia and England, having to compete in the open market against the Oregon-pine mills, in all about forty-four mills, having a daily capacity of four to five million feet. Logs cost at those mills—the highest price—\$6 per 1,000 ft. superficial, or 2s. 6d. per 100 ft. Cost of milling per 1,000 ft. is \$2.25, or 11d. per 100 ft. at ships' slings. The freight is £2 from Puget Sound to Sydney, or 4s. per 100 ft. Logs cost 2s. 6d. per 100 ft., sawing costs 11d. per 100 ft., freight costs 4s. per 100 ft.—equalling 7s. 5d. in Sydney. The above price may vary a little as the freights go up or down. I have known cargoes of Oregon to be sold at 6s. 8d. at ship's slings in Sydney. If the Commonwealth Parliament puts a duty on kauri timber from New Zealand, it will paralyse the industry." Some nine months ago I visited Sydney, and something of that kind was happening then. It might be said, Why are we not smart enough to compete with these people? The circumstances here are altogether different. Their timber is more easily worked, the lengths are longer and the means of getting it to the mills much better, and it does not decrease in value the same as our kauri does any way. I would ask you to remember that we have endeavoured all through, notwithstanding that it has been very irksome, to me especially, to conform with the labour-laws now on the statute-book. We have done so, and the present Factory Act has suited very well. We have got into the working of it, and I think, for the good of the workers themselves, and to prevent ruination to the manufacturers, the matter must be left standing as it is.

Mr. D. GOLDIE, Auckland, examined. (No. 12.)

*Mr. Goldie*: There are just one or two points in connection with this matter that I wish to refer to; the first is in connection with the imports to New Zealand. The imports of timber are increasing. During 1899 the timber imported amounted to £69,000, and in 1900 to £83,000. Mr. White told you he represented a great industry—one of the largest we have in Auckland. He has forgotten to tell you the industry has only been able to pay one dividend of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  and one of 3 per cent. So that with the present favourable circumstances if they can only pay from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in twelve years, what will they be able to do when this additional burden is put upon their shoulders? It means almost absolute ruin. There are two or three things I would like to speak about in this Factories Bill. It is a great mistake to say a factory shall be composed of two or more persons employed in a building in any handicraft, or in preparing or manufacturing goods for trade or sale. If a father and son, or mother and daughter, work in their home in the preparation of any goods for sale, it becomes a factory within the meaning of the Act, say—why the thing is absolutely absurd. Take a monumental mason: he has a yard, and his yard is enclosed by a fence, and that is defined as a factory, the definition of “factory” being simply “an enclosure.” In section 13 there is an innovation never introduced before. It makes provision there that the local body of a particular district shall be the umpire in case of dispute. The Government send their Inspector round, and he objects to certain things in the plans of a factory; then the local body becomes the umpire—it has to find an expert to determine whether those things are to be put there or not. For that, the Government takes all the credit under the Bill, and all the fines inflicted are paid into the Consolidated Fund, and the local body has to find the expert and pay for it. Then, with respect to the number of hours: We object, of course, in Auckland to there being less than forty-eight hours. The Bill, although it makes the forty-five hours, says no person shall work more than four hours without a meal. You must stop, then, at 12 o'clock on Saturdays. You cannot dismiss the men and ask them to come back at 1 o'clock. The Bill also reduces the amount of overtime. The Bill is not very clear upon that, however. It says you shall not work more than three hours in any day, or more than two days in any week. What is really meant, I suppose, is, you shall work three hours on two days. That is a very difficult matter for us. In Auckland we try to compete with America in connection with the island trade. The boat arrives on the Friday night, and goes away on the following Wednesday. We cannot work our men to produce what they require in the islands owing to these restrictions, and we shall simply have to send that vessel back without the timber. You see the absurdity of the thing. You are trying to cultivate a trade in the islands, and have built a vessel for that purpose, and after doing that you say, You shall not supply these people, because we shall not allow you to work your men overtime. Then, in connection with your large buildings in Auckland. They are often constructed of special sizes of timber, and, as the lengths and sizes are not always in stock, we have to cut the timber and get it seasoned whilst the building is in course of construction. We have to work our men overtime to get this timber stacked and ready; if not, the timber is put into the building unfit to be used. Again, we have got to bring our timber one hundred miles, and even a greater distance, from the coast. It is towed by steamer. The timber is towed by steamer, and she sometimes has to take shelter in ports owing to the weather, and during that time our men may, at times, have to stand idle. When it is teeming with rain for days together the men outside have to knock off, and then the mill is blocked and compelled to remain idle for a time. Under this Bill these men, deprived of their work for the time being, cannot make that time good, simply because you cannot allow them under these circumstances. You must put on a night-shift. If you work two sets of men it can only be in the mill itself. The men in the yard have all that work to pick up, and we always find it a most difficult matter to work the two shifts to get the timber stacked the next day. The whole thing is kept in a litter, because each log carries four classes of timber—first rough, heart, the medium, and the second-class. It is all carefully sorted out and stacked away, and you cannot do it at night with artificial light. On the other hand, you may say this: if you cannot work your night-shift you must increase your machinery to be ready when a spurt comes. To that we reply: there are industries simply ruined, carrying thousands of pounds' worth of machinery; they cannot be used to advantage. You will have our mills burdened with a lot of machinery only to be used on certain occasions. It is impossible, absurd, and means ruination to the mills themselves. You propose time and a half as overtime; we propose time and a quarter. We all know that the working of overtime means a loss to ourselves. The men cannot keep up the speed if they have to work for long beyond the usual hours. Then, we object, of course, to the payment of holidays; if the men are going to be paid time and a half, it does seem a monstrous thing the masters should be called upon to pay these men on holidays. For these six days they are to receive full pay, while at the same time they would not work one hour extra unless you pay them time and a half. The Bill claims overtime for each one of them. The Bill says any man who has worked twenty days during the six months preceding a holiday shall be entitled to overtime. These holidays have to be paid to any man who has worked these twenty days. Say a man starts to work for me on the 1st August, and after working twenty days passes on to a second employer, and so on, he can claim overtime from all of his employers. If you cannot claim one hour extra labour from a man without paying him time and a half, what right have we to pay him for a week when he does nothing? With respect to my own business, in the first place the holidays would mean to me a loss of £90. I shall lose also on the hours £390, so that my own particular industry would lose to the extent of £480, leaving out the indirect loss upon the machinery when it is lying idle. If this Bill is given effect to, it means we shall be compelled to raise the price of timber to meet these liabilities. To raise the price of timber means to check the industry. We have this Conciliation Board everlastingly worrying us. At present we have the carters before the Conciliation Board in Auckland, and we have already had to deal with them in connection with

our sawmills. Then we have a person who comes forward and forms an association called an Engine-drivers' Association, and now they threaten to bring us before the Conciliation Board. We have the Conciliation Board in connection with the yards, then the carters' dispute, and now the engine-drivers and the joiners, I understand, are coming before the Arbitration Court; so there is one everlasting worry in connection with this matter. In anticipation of a rise being granted by the Conciliation Board, we raised the price of timber, with this result, that many of us have to complain that orders have stopped; people say, We cannot go in for building with the timber at the present price. Then, we are in competition with the outside trade. They can supply timber at 6s. 8d. per hundred. In buying from the settlers, for 9 ft. girth logs we are paying 6s. 6d. and 7s. per hundred. The Americans can supply the sawn timber, ships' slings, at 6s. 8d. In Sydney they are selling retail at 7s. 9d., timber up to 40 ft. long. Already thousands of sleepers are being landed in New Zealand, which means money leaving New Zealand, whilst we have timber fit for the purpose. The Americans can now deliver sawn timber at about the value we pay the settler for his logs. Oregon pine can be delivered in New Zealand at from 7s. to 8s. per hundred, whilst we are paying 6s. 6d. for logs, one-fourth of which we lose in manipulation. When we buy those logs at 6s. 6d. we lose at least 25 per cent. of them. American doors can be landed here, duty paid, cheaper than we are selling doors at; and we cannot sell them less in consequence of the irksome conditions under which we work. In conclusion, I say here that this country wants a rest from this continual state of irritation, and if not speedily alleviated we shall find that a general stagnation in all the industries will set in, resulting in such a condition of depression that the condition of this colony from 1887 to 1890 will be nothing compared to it.

Mr. JAMES HUTCHEN, of Messrs. Stewart and Co., Wellington, examined. (No. 13.)

*Mr. Hutchen:* We are situated perhaps slightly different to what they are in Auckland. In regard to the hours of labour, our hours of labour are forty-six per week, as twice settled by the Arbitration Court, and the overtime I object to entirely. I do not think that any men, or any Legislature, has got a right to say to a man that we shall compel you to pay money you have not worked for. You might as well take a man off the street and say, "Here my man, here is a week's wages for you." A man just working for you, if he gets a better job—what he reckons is a more constant job—he leaves you at once, and goes away. He is not bound to you in any way, and you are not bound to him in any way. With regard to the clerks and officers, who are reckoned as part of the ironmongery-men in our place, we always pay them for holidays, but the men have no right to have money given them that they have never worked for; and another thing, in regard to engine-drivers—what we call stokers—these men have to come an hour earlier in the morning, or to stop an hour behind at night to bank their fires up. Are these men to be paid for coming at their usual time in the morning, and working a little after at night. There should be liberty given for this. I do not know whether the carters come within the scope of this Bill. A carter has to go to his stable and feed his horses in the morning, and do a little to them at night. I think carters, if they are included in the Bill, should be allowed to do the usual work, the same as now, without any extra pay. In holidays we pay a man extra for looking after our horses, so that the whole of the men have not to come back, but only one. I think these things ought to be seen to in a Bill of this kind, so that things will work fairly. If these men are connected with the factories, I think the Bill should be amended in this direction. I indorse everything that has been said by the other gentlemen in our trade; but their work is slightly different to ours. Of course, there are many peculiar things in the Bill—strange things.

1. *Mr. Arnold.*] With regard to the hours of labour, Mr. White, your mills had the hours of labour regulated about three or four years ago by the Arbitration Court?—That was only in reference to the joiners.

2. What did you work previously to that?—We worked forty-eight hours, and Judge Edwards fixed it at forty-seven.

3. With regard to the country mills, they still work fifty-two hours?—In the country mills—this Conciliation Board business has been all through the country—the Kauri-cutting Company only work fifty-two hours, and pay for fifty-four. Some work fifty-four hours, and some are working fifty-six and fifty-eight. Those, of course, are mills outside the Kauri Company's. The Conciliation award, which has been brought in and not accepted yet, has reduced the hours all round for sawmills to forty-seven in the country.

4. So that, as far as the law is concerned, in the country mills the new Factories Bill will not affect that?—Decidedly so; because, even supposing we accepted the Conciliation award, which is very doubtful, I think we still need some consideration from the Arbitration Court. The Court might not fix the country mills hours at forty-seven. This Act fixes it at forty-four.

5. Do you know that the mills in other parts of the colony—down South, for instance—have accepted the forty-eight hours per week recently?—I understand such is the case. I do not think there will be any great objection for us to accept the same for our country mills in the North. If the workers had asked for forty-eight hours a week then they would have got it; but they ask for an increase of wages.

6. You say at the present time you have to pay time and a quarter for overtime?—Yes.

7. And in the country mills also?—I think so. Except in cases of repairs when the mills are not running. I have always paid it.

8. *Mr. Bollard.*] How long has your company been in existence, Mr. White?—As nearly as possible, twelve years. I have been connected with the Auckland company for twenty-two years.

9. What is the capital?—About a million and a quarter pounds.

10. What percentage has been paid?—When the company was formed there was a guarantee for 4 per cent. for four years. I think there was 10 per cent. paid for two years, then there was an alteration made and we relinquished the 10 per cent.—some did not. We took shares after that,



and I got no more interest at all until the year before last, when I received a dividend at the rate of 2½ per cent. on, of course, a reduced share—the shares were reduced by 7s.—and last year we got a dividend of 3 per cent. on the same thing. We have only paid two dividends for the last three years—one at 2½ per cent. and one at 3 per cent. on the reduced value of shares.

11. The effect of this legislation, if it became law, would be a further crusher?—I am afraid it would crush us out of existence altogether. I have run the Auckland mill for the last ten years, and have been simply working a dead horse. I hope things are going to take a turn for the better.

12. You have worked the whole thing steadily, with everything in order, and without any serious accident?—I have never had the slightest disagreement in connection with the men working in my employ. I think, speaking for myself, I have worked 365 days in the year, with the nights “chucked” in.

13. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] What are the total exports from your mills outside the colony?—One hundred and ninety-nine thousand pounds’ worth, I think.

14. What is the total amount exported to the islands?—That I could not tell you in round numbers. I only know my sales have fallen off from four to five hundred thousand in a month.

15. Cannot you give me your exportation to the islands?—I could not tell you in the money; it used to be looked forward to as the great day for us when the island boat came in.

16. You came here well prepared, and laid great stress on the island trade?—I did not lay so much stress on that as Mr. Goldie did; but it is a fact that our trade has fallen off considerably in the islands.

17. Then, you quoted the prices of timber—the Oregon pine coming into Australia: is the statement made by Mr. Goldie, that you pay 6s. 6d. for the logs, correct?—Sometimes we pay 7s.

18. Under any conditions would it be a difficult matter to compete with America?—Yes, unquestionably. We wish to compete with America under any conditions.

19. To put yourself on that level you have got to sacrifice the capital value of the timber in our colony, and, in addition to that, sacrifice the labour in the colony—you would have to get the labour cheaper: there are conditions which make it impossible for you to compete?—To a great extent; nevertheless, there are certain lines we can manage if we are not crushed too low.

20. Do you know at what price timber can be imported from America into New Zealand?—We can import it at from 6s. 8d. to New Zealand.

21. The next thing will be we shall have to compete with American timber in the colony ourselves?—Yes; we are at present getting a good deal of American timber here.

22. At the present rate you are exporting kauri timber, how many years do you think it is going to last?—As far as we are concerned, about fifteen and twenty with the kauri. Kauri can never be reproduced. It is being spoilt by fires and rotting.

23. Coming to your mills, what is the capital value of the plant now as compared with what it was when you started?—I guess there is a depreciation. I gave you the capital value—that is, the capital value we had. The value of the running-plant is £158,000.

24. What is the value of the timber standing and the land that is leased?—I could not tell you that. That is a matter more for the clerical department.

25. You have been securing land and timber, have you not, during the last few years?—I think the Kauri Timber Company have not secured any fresh leases; I do not think we could afford to do so.

26. Although you can give us the value of your machinery and plant you cannot give us the value of your timber?—No.

27. Has your standing timber gone up in value or decreased in value during the last few years?—I guess it has decreased in value. We have had fires, and different other things that have happened. It has decreased the value of our standing timber.

28. Have you had many fires?—Yes, in the Kaiapoi, two years ago.

29. Do you say your standing timber has depreciated in value?—I am not in a position to swear to that. I am a practical worker and do not do much in the clerical line, except in getting matter of this kind.

30. Out of your profits on the working of the mill, have you used any of that capital for capital account?—I believe there has been some taken off debentures.

31. How much?—I could not tell you.

32. You told us about the dividends. If you are paying off debentures and capital account—? Under the terms on which the money was borrowed there had to be a certain amount paid off.

33. If you have been paying off the debentures out of profits, you could not have it both in the way of dividends and reducing your debts?—I differ with you there. If I make £1,000 and owe £750, it would not be fair for me to say I had made £1,000.

34. If you borrowed £100,000, and paid that off, you would pay that out of profits—the interest and principal? Surely you are improving your business?—If you place a mill down in a bush and cut that bush out, your plant is worth about old iron. It is a fact that in Auckland you will find plenty of sawmills like this.

35. What is your timber worth now?—I showed in my address that in reducing the hours we are not in a very good position now, and doing this and paying for overtime will make it considerably less.

36. All this has a bearing on the case, because you urged you only paid two dividends?—That is all I got.

37. I have companies in my mind’s eye that never paid dividends, yet the shares are at a big premium?—People are very foolish to invest in them.

*Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon:* No, they are improving their properties.

38. *Mr. Hardy.*] You speak of being able to land American doors at 9s. 6d., and your kauri doors are 11s. 6d.?—Yes.

39. How much do you pay in wages for the cost of making a door—the cost of production?—I reckon it 11s. 6d. a door. In speaking on plain cost of wages, about 5s.

40. *Mr. Tanner.*] Mr. White used these words when giving evidence, speaking of a charge for insurance on workmen's wages: "The new Act gives an extra penalty of £100, which is unfair." What do you mean by the "new Act," Mr. White?—I mean this Factories Bill before us. We pay about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. on our wages to the insurance companies under the Compensation Act, and clause 35 of this Bill provides that there is a further penalty of £100. It says: "If, in consequence of any such default as aforesaid, an accident occurs, causing death or bodily injury to any person, then, in addition to the occupier's liability under the last preceding section, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding £100, the whole or any part of which may, in such manner as the Minister directs, be applied for the benefit of the person injured, or of his family or dependants if he has been killed. The penalty imposed by this section shall be deemed to be in lieu of any penalty imposed by 'The Inspection of Machinery Act, 1882,' in respect of the corresponding default under that Act. The occupier shall not be liable under this section if proceedings under the last preceding section to recover the penalty thereby imposed in respect of the default have been taken and dismissed on the merits within one month before the accident occurred. Nothing in this section shall operate to in any way relieve the occupier from any liability which, independently of this Act, he may incur for damage or compensation in respect of the accident or its consequences."

41. There is one point here, and that is with respect to the working fifty-four and fifty-eight hours a week?—Our mills in the country work fifty-two hours.

42. I suppose they prefer to ask you to represent them in a general way rather than send a direct representative? We can understand their opposition up there to the Bill if they are working fifty-eight hours?—I think there is only the one mill working fifty-eight hours.

43. *Mr. Bollard.*] Are your shares at a premium or at a discount?—I do not think it is a fair thing to pull my unfortunate company to pieces.

Mr. GEORGE HENRY BLACKWELL, Kaiapoi, examined. (No. 14.)

*Mr. Blackwell:* Generally speaking, we are not opposed to the principal—I may say the greater part of the provisions of this Bill. We have not the slightest objection to the portions of the Bill as far as the Inspectors appointed by the Government, or the requirements of sanitary conditions, and so on, are concerned. Our own particular industry has been inspected by a number of the members of the Committee, by the Minister of Labour, by the Chief Secretary for Labour, and others; and the result has been that from every one of them we have received commendation for same. I just wish to emphasize what has been said already with regard to restricting the hours of labour. This is the third year in which I have appeared before this Committee on this very point. We, however, agreed to the forty-eight hours cheerfully. Formerly we worked fifty-four hours, and voluntarily reduced the hours from fifty-four to forty-eight without any corresponding reduction in wages; but any further reduction must be followed by a reduction in wages. The provisions in the Act appear to me to leave no room for discrimination at all. Take the woollen industry: there is no physical strain at all upon the men employed. I am bound to say I think in the case of 75 per cent. of the men employed in the woollen-mills, as far as the physical strain of the work is concerned, their places could be taken to-morrow by boys. They are working under the most favourable conditions you could possibly find. They are protected from the weather in winter-time, the rooms are warm, and there is no loss of time; and we contend, sir, that, in view of the fact that a great part of the work is done by the machines and not by the men, it is imposing a serious penalty upon the company by keeping not only the men away from work but the machines lying idle. There is a lot of very costly machinery there, and, as I say, the machines do the work. The physical labour in connection with them is very light, and if the men are taken away the machines are standing there, and it is equal to about  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of our output, which is a very serious matter and worry to us in view of the competition with imported goods. The reduction of hours would necessarily mean an increase in the cost of our goods. The effect, therefore, followed by an increase in imports in our particular line of £91,500 above the previous year, which in itself was a record, may be imagined. The previous year was a record, and yet the result of the advance in price caused by the increased value of wool led, I have no doubt at all, to a very large increase in the imports of these particular lines. Then, sir, we worked night and day, and, while we quite agree with the forty-eight hours, we think that the hours might be left to be arranged mutually, or to the satisfaction of the Government Inspector. We have every confidence if we were allowed to work forty-eight hours, and if the Committee see fit to make that recommendation—to leave the actual working hours subject to the control or approval of the Government Inspector—we shall be satisfied. Our night-shifts work nine hours for five nights, and under the provisions of this Bill can only work forty hours. It will naturally mean a very serious loss, not only to us, but to those men, and if the principle of the forty-eight hours is agreed upon that will be the actual time. Why, the manager of the Mosgiel Mill the other day said that their night-workers actually petitioned to be allowed to work eleven hours for four nights in the week, so as to get off at 10 o'clock on Friday night; and the arrangement seems to be working very satisfactorily. We work nine hours on the four nights, and make up the balance of the time in the last night. We think it would be satisfactory if the principle of the forty-eight hours is agreed upon, and we do not wish to increase the hours. I might here point out that we are in competition with other manufacturers who work very considerably longer hours. In reading the report of the Federation Commission, I note the Chief Inspector of Factories in New South Wales gave evidence before the



Commission, and said, so far as the men workers were concerned, they averaged sixty hours per week. We think, if the Committee can see their way, they should make a recommendation in this direction: keep the forty-eight hours asked for, and allow the hours to be arranged with the operatives themselves. The principle of conciliation we quite approve of, and we are prepared to meet them and fix the hours to suit their convenience. It has worked so in the past very satisfactorily. In winter-time we vary the hours, because it gets dark in the evening, and they come earlier in the morning. It is all done by mutual arrangement, and so far has worked very satisfactorily. With regard to the question of overtime, if we could possibly arrange it we would never work one hour overtime; but there are contingencies arising, more especially in connection with our clothing-factories, where you cannot help it. With regard to seasonable goods, more especially the ladies' fashionable lines, we cannot get the orders until the season is advanced, as often the fashion departments are late in getting them, and then it is a complete rush, and the operatives are obliged to be taken back to work. But, that being the case, we think the present arrangement very much preferable to that obtaining in the proposed Bill. Time and a half is too heavy a penalty altogether to pay, and we shall have to lose a considerable amount of trade by it. Time and a quarter, as at present provided, with the stipulation that the employes are not to work more than two nights in succession, we are quite prepared to accept just now. There is a further increase in the holidays, which is a very heavy impost. Our wages and salaries are £1,200 per week, and every additional day means a tax upon the company of £200; and we think the provisions of this Bill are unreasonable in increasing the number of holidays—the days we receive no return whatever for the wages we are called upon to pay. Reference has been made to that anomaly in the Bill called "forty-five hours." I think that would, of course have to be remedied; it only allows forty-four hours to be worked. Section 32—"Wages payable for holidays." Subsection (2): "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." It is very crude. It must have crept into the Bill by mistake. You will see the openings that are made for those really desirous of making very good wages are very good indeed, and I take it that that particular clause at any rate is not at all likely to go through as it is. Clause 35 provides a "penalty for death or injury through default of occupier." Under the Workers' Compensation Act the worker is protected. Why should a special penalty be inflicted upon the employer, of £100, in this particular case? It is really providing two penalties for one offence. I do not think that that is a principle that ought to be allowed by the State at all. The penalty is already provided for, and I think that particular clause ought to be struck out. Then, with regard to the Bill itself, it does appear to give full opportunities, at any rate to me, to override altogether the principle of conciliation that has been established by the Legislature, and to a large extent, among the employers especially, has been agreed upon. Why, when the power is conceded to the Court, and used by the Court, do we want special provision made in this Factories Bill limiting the hours, when the Court itself has the power to establish the hours? If at any time we may have to appear before the Court, if we can make it appear reasonable that our operatives are working forty-eight hours, the Court has power to reduce them; but I do not see why, by Act of Parliament, we should practically take the decisions from the Conciliation Board and the Arbitration Court. The majority of the woollen-mill operatives throughout the colony wish the forty-eight hours. We are to come before the Arbitration Court, and our own operatives at the woollen-mill at Kaiapoi are appealing for forty-five hours; but they are a very unhappy family on that question, and I think if a ballot was taken in our own mill the result would prove that the majority of the people still desire the forty-eight hours. With this exception all the other mills in the colony desire the forty-eight hours.

Mr. J. C. MACKY, Auckland, examined.

*Mr. Macky:* On behalf of the woollen-mills, I will also confirm what has been said; and, with regard to the Onehunga Woollen-mills, it is a very serious matter for the workers. It is piecework there, and the men in those mills are working fifty hours a week, because they are earning splendid wages by working piecework, and the women and boys are working forty-eight hours, and we can hardly get these people to stop to get their pay, they are so eager. Girls are earning £1 15s. on piecework of forty-eight hours, and if we are going to reduce their hours from forty-eight to forty-four these girls will earn so much the less. The workers in the mill will earn a great deal less under the new Bill, and they simply cannot help it.

Mr. BLACKWELL, continued.

44. *Mr. Hardy.*] How many hands do you employ, Mr. Blackwell?—Eleven hundred and fifty.

45. And what are the weekly wages?—Over £1,200.

46. What is the capital invested altogether?—Paid-up capital, £100,000, and £24,000 reserve.

47. Do you know of your knowledge that the workers have asked for the proposed changes which are now in this Bill?—No; all I know, in our citation before the Board of Conciliation, one of the points submitted was that there should be forty-five hours. I know that the operatives are very much divided. In fact, since the formation of the union the thing has split to pieces.

48. Do you think it is outside your own people's hands, this working the thing up?—It is outside influence.

49. The agitating did not take place within your own people?—It originated from without.

50. *Mr. Ell.*] With respect to the forty-five hours, that does not obtain with regard to the factory?—Only the woollen-mills. With regard to the clothing-factory, we only work forty-five

hours, and have always worked forty-five hours. There it is a matter of very little importance. Under the Act we are allowed to work forty-eight hours, and it became a question whether we ought not to work the forty-eight hours, but decided that as we had been running these hours so long we would not interfere. In connection with our clothing-factory, we have only to turn the gas off which drives the machines and there is an end to our expense.

51. You have been able to carry on your factory successfully in working it at forty-five hours a week?—The clothing-factory.

52. And the company is in a good position, and has paid a very good dividend for twenty-two years?—An average of 7 per cent. for twenty-three years.

53. *Mr. Arnold.*] You told us, Mr. Blackwell, that the Mosgiel operatives petitioned the employers to be allowed to work eleven hours a night for four nights?—The night-workers asked the manager to be allowed to work four nights at eleven hours and the other night at four hours, so that they could get clear from Friday evening until the Monday evening.

54. Are they working on that now?—Yes.

55. With regard to New South Wales, you say they work fifty hours per week there?—Yes; it was one of the Factory Inspectors who was examined by our Federation Commissioners whose evidence I quoted, and it is printed in the evidence of the Commission. Mr. Clegg, Chief Inspector of Factories, New South Wales, said this.

56. Have you much competition with New South Wales?—Oh, yes; there is heavy competition there.

57. More so than with others?—The tariff in Victoria has hitherto precluded both ourselves and others from entering there. New South Wales has been mainly a free port, and both British and Continental manufacturers dump down their surplus manufactures there for sale. At one time we had a branch agency there, with considerable stock, but we found it did not pay and closed it up, and now we are exporting to New South Wales about £6,000 a year. We have an agency there.

58. Still, you are quite willing to continue at the forty-five hours, notwithstanding they work sixty hours in New South Wales?—I was making a comparison when I referred to New South Wales.

59. With regard to the overtime, you said that time and a quarter is a fair thing?—It is fair and reasonable.

60. Does that apply all round, both to your woollen-mills and clothing-factory?—We never work overtime at the woollen-mill. We have been paying time and a quarter for some considerable time, and do not object to it.

61. You said two nights a week was fair: would that apply to the woollen-mills?—The only overtime we work is at the clothing-factory.

62. You consider, as far as the clothing-factory is concerned, the present arrangement is reasonable?—Yes.

63. You do not speak for the woollen-mill?—No.

64. Of course, you represent the company here, Mr. Blackwell, this morning?—Yes; and I am the managing director of the company and president of the Woollen-manufacturers' Association.

65. You do not represent the operatives?—Yes, I do, always.

66. From your own point of view, no doubt?—I think, probably, they would admit it also.

67. If the operatives are dissatisfied, you are not usually the person they would speak to?—No; they would speak to the manager.

68. They would be more likely to speak amongst themselves?—Oh, yes.

69. Or to their representatives in a union, or before a Conciliation Board?—Yes.

70. So, when you say it is the desire of these people to have forty-eight hours a week, you really do not know, do you?—I do know, though not officially.

71. By what one or two have told you?—By what a great many have said. I have been perfectly familiar with them from the very beginning. Out of the twenty-four years, I have been twenty-two years chairman, and have known most of them from childhood. We have been fairly open and communicative one to another. I know there is a good deal of strife and bitterness going on, on account of the Conciliation Board and Arbitration Court. The demands before the Court are contested. I am advised the present demand was considered by the Trades and Labour Council of Christchurch, who laughed and sent it back again for revision; but they declined to revise it. Even the Trades and Labour Council thought it was better to be revised.

72. You speak with regard to the mills in the Southern Island?—I am the president of the Woollen-manufacturers' Association.

73. You speak on behalf of the woollen employes?—Yes, from the reports made by the managers.

74. *Mr. Laurensen.*] Do you pay weekly wages in every case, or do any of your employes work on piecework?—On piecework and weekly wages, but they are paid weekly. At the woollen-mill they pay every Wednesday afternoon, and at the clothing-factory on Thursday.

75. Do you prefer wages by the hour or by piecework?—We think the industry ought to be encouraged, and the more the operatives can get out of the machine the better it pays us.

76. Your employes want piecework?—Yes; though under their demands they ask for the abolition of piecework.

77. *The Chairman.*] You are aware, Mr. Blackwell, a telegram has been received by the Committee approving of the forty-five hours in this Bill?—I am not aware they have telegraphed about it. They have asked for that in the demands before the Board.

*The Chairman:* The telegram is in the possession of the Committee from the secretary of your union approving of the forty-five hours.

78. *Mr. Ell.*] You said there is a good deal of strife amongst the operatives on account of the abolition of piecework?—I am informed the weavers, who are all on piecework, prefer to remain on piecework, and I know there was a good deal of strife over it, and is still; and I understand a number of them have left the union on account of that. They never wanted their privilege interfered with at all.

79. You are aware of the fact that before they can adopt any of the proposals made it must be submitted to all the members of the union?—Yes, I know that. Probably 75 per cent., or at any rate a large proportion of the union, take no trouble at all.

80. *Mr. Arnold.*] They must vote under the Act?—They must vote, but they take no trouble. I think I could suggest a way by which the present arrangement could be improved with regard to the constitution of our Conciliation Boards.

81. *Mr. Hardy.*] Do you object to the payment for holidays, Mr. Blackwell?—Well, we have got along with what we have got; but there seems an annual increase, to which we strongly object.

82. You say a large number of your people are doing piecework: how do you manage the holidays in that case?—They do not get any pay in that case, of course. The pieceworkers get the holidays, but without pay; only those on regular weekly wages get the holidays with pay.

83. You told us your company always pays 7 per cent. per annum?—It has averaged that for twenty-two years. In 1890 we paid no dividend at all; and I do not know if the Committee would like to hear it, Mr. Chairman, but the morning before yesterday, before leaving, we had our meeting and passed our statement of accounts, and we practically show on the working of the year  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; but we are not prepared for any further impositions on that. We have nothing to carry to reserve this year.

84. You believe yours has been one of the most successful companies in New Zealand?—Yes.

85. Do you know of any loss prior to the present company taking it up?—I only know from hearsay. They lost nearly all of their capital.

86. You took it up?—The plant and everything was sold.

87. You got a valuable plant for almost nothing?—We got a plant that cost them £45,000 for £15,000, and with the exception of that year to which I referred we have made a profit every year; and during that year it was owing to circumstances over which we had no control—the strike—with the exception of that one year, when we made a loss of £5,000.

88. *Mr. Tanner.*] What holidays did you pay your hands before “The Factories Act, 1894,” was passed?—I do not remember.

89. Has it not been customary in most large establishments to pay the men wages for Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, and Queen's Birthday?—Yes. As a considerable employer on my own account, I have always paid for and been in the habit of giving all you have named, and a week's holiday to the men in turn, but no overtime is paid. This refers to warehouses and shops.

90. “The Factories Act, 1894,” stipulated five holidays should be paid for, which was a smaller number than what the firms had been in the habit of paying for voluntarily?—Yes, I think warehouses do. The major number of employers not under the Act now pay for holidays not provided in the Act, and, without having any violent antagonism at all to labour, we think it is a fair way the present arrangement is carried out. In Canterbury they think nothing of Labour Day, and we think it is a pity they are compelled to pay for it.

91. How long has it been since Labour Day was instituted in Canterbury?—About twelve years ago, I think.

92. Do you work your people on Labour Day?—We never do it at the mill, and at the clothing-factory if they want a holiday we give it to them, but without wages. We are prepared to find them the work if they want to work. We leave it entirely to them.

93. You are aware that a short Act was passed a year or two ago declaring Labour Day a public holiday?—Yes.

94. And now Labour Day is included with five other days in this Bill, stating these as public holidays which are to be paid for?—Yes.

95. You have been in the habit of paying for six, and sometimes more, in the past?—No; we have only paid for those that we have been compelled to pay under the Act.

96. I went to work in a factory over twenty years ago, and the first thing my eye fell on was a notice that nine particular holidays should be paid for. Regarding the payment for holidays to pieceworkers, how would you arrange to pay wages to pieceworkers on these particular days: have you ever considered that?—They would not be paid at all.

97. Does not the Act say every person employed in a factory shall be paid on those particular days?—That is as wage-earners.

98. Are they not wage-earners?—Not within the definition of the Act.

*Mr. JOSEPH SPARROW, Dunedin, examined. (No. 15.)*

*Mr. Sparrow:* I am an employer of labour in Dunedin in the foundry line. I have been for some time employing probably three hundred hands, and it has always been the custom ever since I can remember—about fifty years—to pay by the hour. We have always paid our men by the hour. They are paid for the number of hours they work. Many of our men would not like to be paid by the week, except office-men and foremen, and so on. But the workmen in our trade prefer being paid by the hour, because there is a great deal of our work done at night and holidays, when other people are making holiday and asleep—so that the other people might not be laid off their work the next day. For instance, there is dredge-work. There are many of those dredges, and the men are only paid by the day; and then there are factory repairs and breakdowns, and if this is not done on holidays or at night the consequence is the men employed in these places would be laid off the work for two or three days. The same applies to ships and buildings. Many of

the large factories in Dunedin keep their repairing-work by them till the holidays, and the woollen-mills, and so on. They employ between three hundred and five hundred hands. If these repairs were not done at night, then their hands would have to be laid off the next day. Well, we wish to be exempted from the Bill. I would ask that we be exempt from this Factories Act altogether, because it would be quite unworkable so far as our factory is concerned. Our engineers are paid by the hour, and if they bring the hours of labour down they are simply reducing the wages. Some of my men make as much as £10, £15, and £20 a fortnight. The work has got to be done. They are paid time and a quarter for the first two hours, and time and a half for the whole night after that. For holidays they are paid double time. As regards Sundays, if my men start at 12 o'clock on Saturday night and work until 12 o'clock on Sundays, they get forty-eight hours for that, and get as far as 1s. 7½d. an hour. Only some by-hands are the cause of the agitation. I wish to ask that the foundries be exempt altogether from the Factories Act.

Mr. G. A. COLES, Auckland, examined. (No. 16.)

Mr. Cole: I am representing the boot-manufacturers in New Zealand, and also speaking on behalf of the tanners and saddlers of Auckland. With regard to the Factories Act, a "person" under the old Act meant women, children, and boys under eighteen years of age. We think, as manufacturers in the leather industry, that that should remain, and that the men should be left out of the Act altogether. In speaking on the hours of labour being reduced from forty-eight to forty-five, which really means forty-four hours with the hour off for meals, it is the opinion of my trade, and also of the allied trades, that it would be impossible, in face of the competition from other countries, who are working such long hours, to carry on our industries at all. I might tell you, gentlemen, in the award lately given in Christchurch, where I was present at the time, Mr. Justice Cooper's remarks, in speaking on this point, were that the employes did not show in their evidence before the Court why there should be any reduction in the hours, but rather otherwise, as they were in competition with such countries as America, which was working sixty hours, and England, which was working fifty-two hours, while in our colony they were working forty-eight hours. And then there is Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, working from sixty to seventy hours. So the hours given by the decision of the Arbitration Court were that the trade should remain at forty-eight hours. I might say since the Arbitration Court has been formed and these decisions have been given we have no fault to find with the Arbitration Court whatever. In fact, as a trade, we have come to the conclusion that we have received a fair and impartial hearing, that the matter before the Court has been fairly gone into, the evidence given on both sides has been exhaustive, and the decisions arrived at have been satisfactory to the trade as a whole. At first we found great difficulty in conforming to these rules—the competition has been so strong and profits so small. However, we made up our minds to do our best, and the trades have been working under better conditions than for years. We object to any change in the number of hours, because it is impossible to compete with other countries in working shorter hours than forty-eight. There has been no further demand on the part of our employes, and why should there be any alteration unless there is? Speaking for my own firm, I am in touch pretty well with all my own men, and find they know nothing of this Bill whatever. And when the Bill was spoken of in our factory the men were perfectly astonished, and had no desire for any such legislation to take place. In clause 19, Overtime: "The prescribed number of working-hours may from time to time be extended, but not more than three hours in any day or more than two days in any week, or more than thirty days in any year, or on any holiday or half-holiday. On any such occasion a person shall not be employed for more than four hours continuously without having an interval of at least half an hour for rest and refreshment. 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: Provided that when the ordinary rate is by time, and not by piecework, the overtime rate shall not be less than sixpence per hour for those persons whose ordinary wages do not exceed ten shillings a week, and ninepence per hour for all other persons so employed; and shall be paid at the first regular pay-day thereafter. The occupier of a factory shall at all times keep a record-book called the 'Overtime-book,' wherein shall be entered a correct record showing in the case of each person who is employed during such extended hours under this section the name of the assistant and the respective dates and periods of such employment. The Overtime-book shall at all times be open to the inspection of the persons employed and of the Inspector. The Inspector may at any time require the occupier to verify the entries in the Overtime-book by statutory declaration in such form as may be prescribed by regulations." In the leather industries and industries affected by importation we have what we call "seasons' trades." These trades are governed, of course, by the demand. We are, therefore, unable to say what is likely to be required very much ahead. Therefore we have what you might call the two slack months in the first season of the year, and four busy months. Our custom has been to keep our business running fully, because when men come to work they like to earn a living. We have never sent an employe away—unless it has been a case of the greatest urgency—from the works. Under this new régime we have found it necessary to lose a few days on several occasions. The old style of thing would be, in the busy season I used to call all hands together, and say, "Look here, lads, we are very busy; it is a question of working overtime." I then told them they could work from 6 o'clock in the morning until 10 o'clock at night if they chose. I left the factory open, and I or my foreman had to be there. That was both for day-workers and pieceworkers. Well, I might say that we did not like overtime. We would not work overtime if we could possibly help it; but we are obliged to meet the requirements of our customers. The limitation of three hours in any one day and to two days in a week, and to thirty days in a year, simply means that we could not work overtime, because it would be impossible to carry on our business on those lines. Overtime means—in New Zealand, where you have to catch boats, shipping from one end of the colony to the

other—the work has to be done at the time it is required. If you have got to arrange in that way we cannot see how it would be possible to carry on our business in any of these industries. Speaking on the question of holidays, it has never been the custom in the North—in Auckland—to pay for holidays. The Act says Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, King's Birthday, and now there is a desire to include Labour Day. With regard to these holidays, too, it is a loss to the business, without having to pay for it. We estimate when we close down—supposing an order is given by the Mayor for a holiday—that a public holiday means a loss to us of from £20 to £25, and not because the hands are doing nothing, which is wilfully wrong. The next day after a holiday the men and boys never feel equal to the same work; and we therefore cannot see why these holidays should be included in this Bill. Then, there is another clause which affects us, and that is, of course, the penalty clause for compensation for accidents. We think the workman is fully protected by the Employers' Liability Act. We do not see that there is any necessity for any legislation further than that. In this boot industry, and also in the saddlery industry, it is a very serious matter. To show you the difficulty we are suffering under at the present time—and I am sorry to see intelligent workmen in New Zealand will not take the trouble to look up these matters before me; if you speak to the ordinary tradesman he will tell you manufacturers are enlarging their establishments and that trade is increasing and not diminishing. But we must take the facts and the figures. The imports of boots into New Zealand are increasing very rapidly. In 1898 the value of the boots—758,688 pairs which came into New Zealand—was £122,371; and in 1899 they increased to 874,596 pairs, of the value of £144,717. Now, gentlemen, that has been going on for some years; yet, in the face of it, I say I regret it, because, speaking of our men, we have no fault to find with them at all. I should be very sorry to have any feeling that the men should think otherwise. I should like them to pay more attention to this increased importation. The increase of these imports in 1899 over 1898 (£22,346) simply means that it would employ a factory of 150 hands and keep that factory running the whole of the year at forty-eight hours a week. This number of imports means, also, more than a pair of boots for every man, woman, and child in New Zealand—those that have been imported last year into this colony. Now, gentlemen, the men come along and they tell you, "Well, the best thing you can do is to increase the duty." I might tell you that we have only to go to our sister colony, Victoria, in that respect. Victoria has been the greatest protectionist colony of any in the Australasian group. I visited that colony some three years ago this month, and I found a prohibitive duty on boots in Victoria. Many of those boots were being manufactured in Victoria at less money than the actual duty paid on the imported article, and the state of the workers was such that I felt that I was in the Old Country and seeing men working under worse conditions than I had seen there. I do not think we want to have that state of things in this colony. Just to show you what we have to compete with—one would almost imagine that we were living in America and getting the lead from a little country like New Zealand, but it is the opposite. The American is the man to-day in manufactures. A few days ago I had a letter from America which came from my own son working in one of the large factories there. I wrote to him asking for the price of labour on a certain article in competition with ours. The price for that operation in America was 9½d. In my own factory in Auckland for the same operation it costs us 3s. 1d., a difference of 2s. 3½d. in that operation alone. You will quite see what we have to contend with, and that it is impossible for us to compete with that state of things if our hours are reduced.

99. *Captain Russell.*] What wage is the American operative earning?—He is working sixty hours a week; our men are working forty-eight hours. A man at £3 a week is as well off here as a man in America at £5. The difference in hours makes that difference.

100. *The Chairman.*] What are the earnings?—The earnings vary very much. They are all on piecework. My son is now an operator on one of the machines there. We pay a man £3 10s. a week for working the machine here; my son is getting £5 a week for the same operation there. The difference is this: my man is doing just one-fourth of the work that my son is doing in America.

101. *Captain Russell.*] What is the American earning at 9½d. per pair?—A man working at 9½d. per pair earns from £3 to £4 a week, and if he can get a constant supply of this work he can earn good wages. We, as a body of manufacturers, have come to the conclusion that it is wise to send a body of our men to America to let them see the men at work there, and they can come back and report to the men here what is being done there; we cannot convince them otherwise. We are going to subscribe for these men to go. In conclusion, I might say that the tanners and curriers, the saddlers, and the boot-manufacturers of New Zealand all think that this Bill should be withdrawn entirely. For this reason: the Factories Act as it stands has given general satisfaction. The provisions in the Factories Act which we are working under now provide for all of the contingencies of the trade. It protects the women and children and every one; and we think the men are quite protected under our Arbitration and Conciliation Courts, and the colony now requires a rest from its labour legislation. This year I have spent three weeks in Christchurch and one week here—that is four weeks I am away from my business—and I have given an immense amount of time in Auckland to my association. It is harassing our business to pieces. I will take a report from two of our companies in the boot trade to show that this legislation on the businesses must come to an end. It is reported that one of our companies is not able to pay a dividend this year. One, which has only been able to pay a dividend eight years out of twenty, has come out with about 5 per cent. This industry, which is employing some thousands of hands, and the other allied industries dependent upon it, is a large one. We are quite willing and quite satisfied with the late decision of the Court, and we feel sure that if our men will only qualify themselves that they will be able to earn good wages, and that we shall be able to keep out the imported article.

102. *Mr Tanner.*] What are the average earnings of them, taking the whole body of them, in your factory?—We have no men under the minimum wage. I should think that the average earnings are from £2 5s. to £2 10s. for forty-eight hours.

103. Are there any at £2?—There are none under £2 2s. You know as well as I do that if these men like to qualify themselves they might earn far more. The great difficulty with the young colonial workman is that he has no ambition to excel beyond a certain point in his business, because

he is satisfied if he earns sufficient to pay his board and put a little on the totalisator. He has no ambition to rise beyond that, but the American goes in for earning money. I have been a manufacturer now in this colony for something like fifteen or sixteen years, and have been connected with the leather trade thirty-seven years, and I never had a more willing and a better class of men to deal with than in our colony. As a body of men I admire them, but there is a want of ambition in their trade. It does not matter how you try to get that ambition into them, somehow or another if there is going to be a horse-race meeting, or a football match, or an athletic meeting, that stands first.

104. *Mr. Hardy.*] Do you make up much material to be manufactured in the colonies?—Yes; the tanners are making rapid strides in New Zealand.

105. Is it a very large amount you use?—Yes, we use a great deal.

106. Could you not equalise matters by reducing the price of the raw material which comes to you?—The raw material is not affected very much. If the Customs could take off some of the duty it would assist us, no doubt. Then you have the tanner stepping in.

107. The skins, the hides, and all that sort of thing: could you equalise it by giving the farmers less for their skins?—I do not think they would take less. But I do not think there is anything to find fault with in the leather. Directly the tanner here asks more than the English and the American tanner, of course he loses the sale.

108. Supposing you could get your skins a little cheaper, could you not prepare your colonial leather at a smaller price?—I do not think so; the labour is so expensive. That is not so with our friends; but any saving in that direction in the colony, through the expense of handling, would be used up.

109. The labour for handling the material is greater than the raw material itself?—Yes, I think that is so in the colony.

110. *Mr. Laurensen.*] You say your son served four times as much on a machine in America as one of your men is serving on a similar machine in your factory; how do you account for that?—It is a technical part of the trade. The machines are exactly the same, but the conditions are totally different. If we could manufacture, say, ten thousand pairs a day, or five thousand pairs a day, of five or six lines, our men would become more expert. I am not blaming the men altogether. For instance, my son was in Chicago with a house that had an output of ten thousand pairs a day done. When the war broke out, he was sent for by a firm whom he was with previously to come back, because he was an expert in his particular line. He is the only one left now in the factory on that line. They get large contracts—one contract for 150,000 pairs and another large one; and when working on large contracts like that they become expert. Our orders in New Zealand are very small indeed, and the conditions of the trade in this colony are totally different to those in America. I should like to see some of our men go—and I should like to go myself—to America and England, and see the conditions under which they work there.

111. Did you ever hear of any one connected with the factory state that their wages should be increased by giving less to the farmer?—No. I think if you were to touch the farmers you would get into hot water.

112. *Captain Russell.*] You made a very interesting statement about the want of ambition in the young operatives: is that attributable to any cause you know of?—I have made a study of this thing for some years, and the only cause I can think of is that the freedom of the colonial life and the conditions of life are so totally different to what they are in the Old Country, and the want of control of the young people. Our young people are under no control by their parents. After the boy or girl is apprenticed, the parents take no interest in the welfare of that child. They (the apprentices) come into the factory merely as a machine. Unless you send for these parents you never see them from the day they arrive with their child until it leaves. The apprentices grow up in an indifferent state. As soon as the boy begins to get about £1 5s. he becomes a man, and does as he likes. There is not that ambition to excel at his trade. Take a boy at fourteen, for instance—the first year is a very difficult year with all boys, more or less; the second year, if he is smart—we have good men looking after our apprentices—and a good boy, he gets on splendidly; the third year I have had numbers of boys showing as good work as any man in the department. After that the boy declines, until at the end of his fifth year you are very glad to get rid of many of them.

113. Do you imagine that to be attributable to the knowledge of the socialistic trend of our legislation?—No doubt. *Mr. Minnie*, of Messrs. Minnie and Day, employs a great many girls in a biscuit-factory, and he has found it necessary, on account of the men and women "skylarking" when working together, to alter their rules. He decided that the girls should have half an hour for dinner, and go off an hour earlier. This was arranged with the girls and *Mr. Minnie*, but then the Inspector of Factories walked in and said the girls must have a full hour for their dinner. The following day *Mr. Minnie* went round the factory as usual at luncheon-time, and found the girls were not there as he had arranged, and he asked the foreman about it. The foreman told him the Inspector told them that they must have a full hour for dinner. The effect of it was this: when *Mr. Minnie* spoke to them about it they thought that *Mr. Ferguson* had the full power and control of going into that factory and doing as he liked. *Mr. Minnie* gave all those girls notice of dismissal. That brought *Mr. Ferguson* down, and *Mr. Ferguson* was told that if he was going to tell them what to do he must pay them. The people have got the idea that the proprietor has lost the control of his business through this legislation.

114. Do you think that the young operatives themselves feel that they are going to be kept down if the present system of legislation is continued, or that it is going to elevate their chance of becoming master tradesmen?—I do not think there is any ambition.

115. I want to get the reason why there is not this ambition?—It is very hard to say what is the cause of it. I know that our old members—*Mr. Arnold* and *Mr. Tanner*—had an ambition to rise, but we do not see that ambition now.

116. *Mr. Tanner.*] Did not this demoralisation exist twenty years ago, but was not so visible, because at that time the great bulk of our employés were English born?—I think that was it.

117. And the decline of the European percentage, is it not?—Yes.



WEDNESDAY, 21ST AUGUST, 1901.

MR. JAMES YOUNG examined. (No. 17.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your name?—James Young, general manager of the New Zealand Farmers' Dairy Union.

2. What do you represent?—The dairying industry.

3. Is that for the whole of the North Island?—I am president of the Dairy Factory Managers' Association in addition to that. Mr. Harkness, president of the National Dairy Association, is also present.

4. Will you kindly give us your views on the Factories Bill now before the Committee?—Well, gentlemen, every one knows that the dairying industry is essentially a summer industry. It is only during four or five months of the year that we have the busy season, and if the hours of labour are restricted I do not know how it could be carried on, because the product—cream—is a perishable article, and it must be turned out the same day as it comes in. Of course, the separating is done in the morning owing to the farmers coming in early. Then the cream has to be allowed to ripen before you can churn and cool it; after this, it has to be worked, stored, and packed, so as to make room for the next day's supply of cream that is coming in from the different creameries. In the winter-time, of course, it is like three days' work a week with us, and at the most six hours a day. If we are brought under the operation of this Act it will simply ruin us. Instead of the men being kept on in the winter-time and getting the same wages, we will have to pay them off, and they would be idle; and, further, it would require two staffs. That means two managers, because it is the manager of the factory who is responsible for the output of the factory, and he has got to be there to see the cream before it is made into butter. And the same with regard to cheese. Of course, the milk in the cheese-factory has to be left out until the milk is in a proper condition to make it into cheese. That necessitates our being a little later in the day; on other days it is quick, and can be put through rapidly. After the great help the Government has been to the dairying industry, it would be simply knocking this industry on the head if it were brought under the operations of this Act, because the Land for Settlements Act would be no good without the dairying. The land on which creameries are put the farmers could get nothing for, and the land would be of no service if it were not for these creameries. If we have the competition in the Old Country—that we will have in the coming season, and in the future—it will take us all our time, with all the facilities that we have, to make the industry pay, because, with regard to the sale of butter, the greater part made in the colony is exported and sold for what it will bring in the Home market; and competition is becoming so keen indeed with all the different countries going into dairying that if we are brought under the operations of this Act it will simply mean that we will not be able to make it pay. In regard to the country factories, I dare say they may be working perhaps ten hours a day in the summer; but in the winter-time they work three days a week, or, at the most, in other factories, perhaps about six hours a day; and if we have got to put on two staffs and pay overtime in the summer season, it means that the men will be shut off in the winter-time. I do not know that I have got any more that I can say, Mr. Chairman. But the present cows that we have got have to be milked six or seven days a week, and if we could get them only on six days a week and have no Sunday-work, of course it would be the making of the dairying industry. The Sunday's cream has got to be brought in in the morning, and it necessitates double work on that day, and of course that throws the operations of the whole week back. I think, gentlemen, that is all I have got to say in regard to this branch.

MR. WILLIAM MITCHELL examined. (No. 18.)

In reply to the Chairman's invitation to give his views on the Bill, Mr. Mitchell said: I will indorse all Mr. Young has said.

5. *The Chairman.*] What do you represent?—The Cheltenham Dairy Factory, and I do not think our employes work, taking the year through, more than forty-four hours a week; in the summer-time they work longer hours. At this time of the year we take it in turns going for a month's holiday. There is no necessity for the men to work on in the winter, and if we were brought under this Act I do not see how we could carry on at all in the summer-time. It is not necessary, after what Mr. Young has said, for me to say more.

6. *Mr. Bollard.*] If you were brought under the operation of this Act, the only way you could work would be by having a double staff?—That is so.

7. How much would that increase the cost of production?—It would do so by quite half—quite double, or nearly so.

8. The greater bulk of the butter produced by the factories in this colony is sent Home to compete against the world?—That is so.

9. What would be the result if you were compelled to have a double staff, and increased cost of production: you would have to give the farmer less?—The factories belong to the farmers.

10. This would come out of the pockets of the farmers?—Yes.

11. And, in your opinion, would not improve the condition of the worker?—It would not. If a concensus of the opinion of the workers were taken, they would themselves say it could not be done.

12. That is to say, if they were employed for four or five months a year, the remainder of the year they would be idle?—We would simply have to shut the dairy factories down.

13. *Mr. Hardy.*] Do I understand you to say the creameries are working on Sundays as well as other days in the week?—They are working every day except in the winter-time. In the winter-time they are only working every other day.

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14. Is it necessary to get the milk away from the dairies as soon as possible?—Yes; it must be done. In the summer-time we have to “run” every day.

15. I am aware they do so down South, but was not certain whether it was necessary or not?—It is necessary; the milk will not keep until the Monday morning.

16. *Mr. Laurensen.*] Do you keep your men all the year through?—Yes.

17. About what hours do they work in the summer?—Between nine and ten hours.

18. What hours do they work in the winter?—About six hours, and only three days a week. They get paid the same wages, and we give them a month's holiday on pay.

19. What wages do you pay them?—We pay the lowest £2 10s., and some get about £3 per week.

20. *Mr. Arnold.*] Do you employ any boy-labour?—We have got two boys, I think, in the Wellington factory here.

21. Do they work the same hours as the men?—They come on at 8 o'clock in the morning, and are let away earlier than the other hands. The Inspector sees to that.

22. In this Bill you object to the length of hours and the overtime pay as far as the dairying industry is concerned, and nothing else?—It is only the restriction of hours—because we could not get through the work.

23. You said, if a consensus of opinion were taken of the employes, they would not be favourable to this Bill?—No; because we would have to pay them off in the winter-time.

24. How do you know that?—Because I am amongst them always.

25. Individually they say that to you as an employer?—Yes.

26. *Mr. Tanner.*] You have heard the evidence of Mr. Young, Mr. Mitchell, and you say you confirm it?—Yes.

27. Do you confirm it in the particulars with regard to giving the employes a month's holiday and paying them for that holiday?—Yes.

28. That practice prevails in your establishment?—Yes.

29. Your men are never without wages all the year round?—That is so.

30. *The Chairman.*] Do you know if the same conditions obtain in all the other factories which are run by private individuals as in yours?—So far as I know the Crown Dairy Company—they are alongside of us in the Forty-mile Bush—do the same.

31. Do you find any inconvenience from the fact that your boys come under the Factories Act at present?—Well, no; there are very few boys that we employ.

32. You do not desire that there shall be any alterations so far as they are concerned?—No.

33. *Mr. Collins* (to Mr. Young).] From what you have said, Mr. Young, I gather that you raise no objection to the Factory Act at present on the statute-book?—No.

34. What you object to is the new matter introduced in this Bill?—Yes.

Mr. JOSEPH GEORGE HARKNESS examined. (No. 19.)

35. *The Chairman.*] What is your name?—Joseph James Harkness.

36. What do you represent?—I am president of the National Dairy Association, which has a membership of sixty in connection with the dairy factories throughout the North Island. I am also secretary and manager of the largest dairy factory in Taranaki, the Midhirst Dairy Company.

37. Will you kindly give us your views as to how the Factory Act is going to apply to the dairying industry?—In the first place, in reference to the interpretation of the Act, it says “‘Factory’ means any building, enclosure, or place in which two or more persons are employed, directly or indirectly, in any handicraft, or in preparing or manufacturing goods for trade or sale, and includes (whatever the number of persons employed therein) every bakehouse (meaning thereby any building or place in which any article of food is baked for sale for human consumption),” &c. I mean to say that the interpretation in connection with the Act will apply to a private dairy where there might be a hundred and fifty cows, and where a man, his son, or his wife or daughter would come under the provisions of the Act. The interpretation of the Act is very far-reaching. I do not know why the butter- and cheese-manufactories should be called “‘factories’” at all. For want of a better term, we class these places as factories, but they are simply creameries, where we skim milk. With reference to the conditions limiting the hours of labour to forty-five, it is utterly impossible that we could do the work within the given time. It simply means that co-operative factories would have to practically double their staffs to do the work. Our season begins from September and goes on to May. We will admit that during that period our staff have fairly long hours, but from the end of May till the end of August they work usually every other day, and have very good times, as a rule; and in the beginning of the season, in September and October, they do not work very long hours, nor do they in the months of April and May; and our manufacture is entirely different to everything else. We cannot put two staffs on to manipulate the output. In a cheese-factory the milk is brought in and set. It might be hours practically before you can bring that to a certain condition in which you can manipulate it. No man will let a second man come in and control that stuff. It is precisely the same with skimming and the ripening of cream. I would not give way to any man to come and take over this responsibility. It therefore means that we would have to practically double our staff to carry on the work we are now doing, and if you bring us under the clause in this Act which says we are to work forty-five hours a week it simply means we cannot do it. We represent something like forty-five dairy factories round about us, and there the farmers are absolutely in the dairying industry and not doing anything else. I am not speaking from any personal motive, but as one who thoroughly understands the business, and I feel it cannot be carried on under these conditions.

38. *Mr. Laurensen.*] You say they work fairly long hours in the summer: what are the hours?—They average about ten hours.

39. *Mr. Bollard.*] I suppose an increase in the pastoral production will have to be paid for by the farmer—by the man supplying the milk?—The co-operative factories are running on these



lines: after paying the cost of manufacture, the farmer receives back every fraction of a penny the butter has realised. In connection with our factory, it turned over £34,000 last year, and after paying the working-expenses of the factory and all necessary charges the farmer gets back every penny of it on his butter, and any extra charge for wages would come out of the pocket of the farmer. Our wages amount this year to £1,350, and I do not see that we are sweating the employés.

40. A lot of your butter is sold in the colony, is it not?—Well, we get a very much better market in London.

41. If you were brought under the provisions of this Act you would not be in the position of being able to increase the cost to the consumer in the colony?—Butter is fetching to-day 9½d. to 10d. in London. If we sell any in the local market we expect the local people to pay the same price here.

42. Supposing you were brought under the operations of this Act, and the cost of production was increased, could you get 1s. a pound for what you sell in the colony?—Undoubtedly not. Instead of paying £1,350 for wages, we should have to pay £2,200, by working two staffs; and I question whether we should manufacture so good an article as we are doing if brought under the provisions of this Act.

43. What rates of wages do you pay your men?—As secretary and manager of the whole concern, I get £240 a year. The butter-man gets £3 10s. to £3 15s., the next assistant £2 2s., and the creamery-hands about £2 5s., £2 10s., and £2 a week. I would like the Committee to recognise this fact: that in years gone by when a factory has ceased to work it has been the practice of co-operative concerns, and also proprietary ones, to discharge their hands. It is manifestly unfair that that should be done. I have set my face strongly against it, and kept the hands on all the season, though I have been opposed by the managing directors and the shareholders. I recognise that if a man works here in one season he should be kept on in the other. The feeling is growing that these men ought to be retained and not discharged.

44. Do you know anything about the feelings of the employés in connection with this Act?—I also am a member of the Factory-managers and Assistants' Association which we have in this Island, and which is a very extensive one. We have no desire whatever to be brought under the Factories Act as it is here. We bring the lads into the factories, and they work their way up until they become butter-makers and factory-managers, and they seem very well satisfied with their positions.

45. *Mr. Hutcheson.*] You told the Committee that your work is intermittent throughout the year, and you have also told us that you have endeavoured to retain the employés during the slack times: do you retain them on their usual pay throughout the year—do all have the same wages as in busy times?—Exactly. In connection with my own factory, during the winter season we have been running the main factory and three creameries, and the men in the creameries, I may say, are paid according to results. The men receive the same in the months of June, July, and August as for the other months in the year. We give them a little labour, such as painting, in the slack time. For one day in the week they are perfectly at liberty to go away, and they are paid for it.

46. *Mr. Ell.*] You admit the hours are rather long during the busy season: what are the hours during the remainder of the season?—I work fifteen hours myself, and intend to do so notwithstanding legislation. The butter-men start in the summer season about 5 o'clock. They have to light up the fires. The practical work of the factory does not begin probably until 6 or 6.30 o'clock, and it is usually done about 3.30 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon. It is necessary for one of the hands to watch the refrigerator during the cooling. There are six or seven hands in the factory, and they take it in turns.

47. What are the hours they work during the slack season—at this period of the year?—For four hours a day. Only four hours in the one day are worked in June, July, and August; and there is very little indeed to be done, for the simple reason that it is quite an exception in the industry that the men should be dairying. It is only by a great effort that we can get some of our people to go and milk during these months, and the question is to get fresh-made articles daily during these months of the year for our local customers.

48. *The Chairman.*] Do you find the present Factory Act working oppressively in regard to the dairies?—I have no objection to it.

49. Are you aware that the new Act and the old Act are comparatively identical?—Yes. At the same time I do not agree with the proposed Act.

50. You have no reason to anticipate that there will be any alteration in existing conditions, seeing that it has been going on for several years. Do all the dairy factories work exactly the same?—I do not agree with that definition of the word "factory."

51. You admit that it is necessary that the boys should be taken cognizance of: how are boys or girls under fifteen years of age worked?—In connection with our business there is nothing of the kind.

52. That is to say you do not work your boys over eight hours?—No.

53. Then, it will leave you in exactly the same position?—Yes.

54. You said you had a better market in London than there is in New Zealand?—Yes.

55. Does that apply all over the colony?—I think so.

56. Do you know the Taieri-Peninsula Milk-supply Company?—Yes.

57. Are you aware that the greater part of their output is sold at 1s., and whatever is left at 9d. in the London market?—That is hardly correct, I think.

58. That is absolutely correct?—I understand the output of the Taieri-Peninsula Milk-supply Factory sold at 10½d. f.o.b., London, for this year. I know nothing at all about what they may do locally.

59. Are you aware that they retail it at the Taieri for 1s. for the summer and 1s. 2d. for winter, independent of their output for export, so that their local market is better than their Home market?—The local market, so far as this Island is concerned, is not as high. Our butter netted us 10d. last year; it would be better to ship home.

60. I suppose it is the same in dairying as in everything else—one or two brands will get a monopoly?—Yes, I suppose it is the same in the Taieri as here.

61. You do not think that that applies generally?—No, not in this island.

62. *Mr. Hardy.*] What is the cost of putting the Taieri butter on the local market?—I do not know much about the Taieri.

63. *The Chairman.*] Under the same conditions the local market might be better than the Home market?—Whilst the Taieri-Peninsula Milk-supply Company may probably in New Zealand sell for 1s. or 1s. 3d. the whole of the season's product, you have to recognise this fact: that, if many of the companies fix their price like that with their customers all the year round, in the months of June, July, and August butter may possibly rise to 1s. 6d. per pound in this colony, and they will be losing money. Making 1s. per pound all round is not making an extortionate rate.

64. They get 1s. 2d. in the winter months?—They are losing this winter.

65. Every winter it is the same; they get 1s. 2d. I suppose you would be quite satisfied to take 1s. and 1s. 2d. all the year round?

*Mr. Young:* We would not get that all the year round.

Mr. WILLIAM FERGUSON examined. (No. 20.)

In reply to the Chairman's invitation to state his views on the Factories Bill, Mr. William Ferguson, secretary of the Wellington Harbour Board, said: I would ask, sir, that the local bodies should be specially exempted from the provisions of "The Factories Act, 1901." Both the interpretation in the existing Act and that in the present Bill are very similar to each other. An attempt was made some years ago to bring the Wellington Harbour Board under the provisions of this Act, but without success. Still, under the strict legal definition of the interpretation of this Act, there is no doubt but that the Wellington Harbour Board may be considered a factory; and, from various points of view, it is not desirable. I consider that not only Harbour Boards, but all other local bodies should be exempted from the provisions of Acts of this class. We are carrying out statutory duties, and there is no question of our being a factory in the common sense of what a factory is. In subsection (1) of section 2 you define a factory as being a place where two persons are employed in any handicraft. That, I submit, is a very wide interpretation indeed, and I would suggest to you, in passing, that that includes a great many callings and trades which certainly are not factories. For instance, I take it that an architect employing a draughtsman might be brought under the provisions of this Act. The interpretation is very wide. Where the Harbour Board could be brought under the provisions of the Act is in the employment of carpenters, plumbers, and all handicraftsmen of a similar nature, and certain men in the stores; and the whole of the Board's property would be defined as a factory if it were brought under the operations of this Act. Again, under section 3—viz., "Every building, enclosure, or place in which steam or other mechanical power or appliance is used for the purpose of preparing or manufacturing goods for trade or sale, or packing them for transit"—we shall be a factory. That is a clause they tried to bring us under before. "The packing of goods for transit": We dump wool, and we examine, repack, and dump hemp. Under that provision the Harbour Board might be brought in if the Labour Department so desired it, and, that being so, it would add considerably to the difficulty of our work. There are times when overtime is required for extra work, and then all the various provisions as to keeping records of all persons employed in the factory, and registration, the rates of wages, notices, and all the rest of it, would have to be carried out. I need scarcely tell you that where we have casual labour employed it would mean an enormous amount of clerical work if that were brought into force. I think it is not the intention of the Legislature that the local bodies should be brought in. Mr. Rounthwaite, the City Engineer, accompanied me to the Committee's meeting, and I would ask that he be permitted to give evidence before you.

Mr. R. S. ROUNTHWAITE examined. (No. 21.)

In reply to the Chairman's invitation to give his views on the Bill, Mr. Rounthwaite, City Engineer, said: I only desire to shortly support the views expressed by Mr. Ferguson. I think public opinion is perhaps sufficient to insure that the employés under the Council are not sweated in any way, and that they are treated fairly. The point I would like to impress chiefly upon the Committee is, under the proposed Act the Council itself is practically a Court of appeal, and I think such Court should hardly be brought under the operations of the Act. In the case of any requisition being made by the Inspector, the reasonableness or otherwise of such requisition is a matter for the City Council or Borough Council to deal with, and I hardly think, therefore, that the Council, which does not work for private profit in any way, should be brought under the operation of this Act. It affects the Council to a small extent. I may say, in passing, it seems that the provisions in the Bill as to hours and wages, as proposed, are going to upset entirely all the recent awards of the Conciliation Board and Arbitration Court. There does not seem to me to be any provision for awards that have been made and which are now running. I do not think, Sir, that I need say anything further.

66. *Mr. Ell.*] You say, Mr. Rounthwaite, that local authorities may be depended upon not to sweat employés in any way?—Yes.

67. Strong complaints were made with regard to the hours worked and the wages paid by the City Council to their employés on the trams, but I believe they have come to a settlement now?—They might have come to a settlement earlier. We have agreed to the same settlement that we offered before.

68. Perhaps you are not aware that in Christchurch complaints have been made against local bodies. I had complaints made to myself by one of the employés working sixty or seventy hours a week on some occasions. I think that is approaching towards sweating. The mere fact of the man working for local authorities is not a safeguard against working long hours and below the ordinary rate of pay?—I put it that public opinion generally was sufficient to prevent any unfair treatment of men in large towns. In connection with local bodies, that has been my experience in large and small towns throughout the Kingdom.

69. So far as one city I have mentioned is concerned, public opinion is not having the effect there of remedying unfair conditions?—Of course, the Council cannot interfere.

70. *Mr. Collins.*] Have you found it at all irksome in working under the Factory Act at present?—We have never been, as far as I am aware, dealt with under the Factory Act. It is news to me that we are really under the existing Act.

71. Have you any reason to anticipate any alteration in the position?—Clearly, under the definition of the interpretation clause in this Bill, we would be put under the heading of "factory." They might, if they had chosen, brought us under the Factory Act.

72. And because they have not in the past, they should not in the future?—It is quite possible they did not think they would be able to do so.

73. Although you make, perhaps somewhat justly, complaints against the interpretation of the word "factory," which would bring you within the provisions of the Act, might not the limiting of that interpretation exclude some persons who ought to be within the interpretation of the Act: do you not think there are some places which would escape, and which ought to be looked after?—I think if the City Council, which is an appeal Court in the matter, were exempted that would meet the case.

74. And you really want other local bodies to be excluded?—Precisely.

75. You would hold that local bodies, being in a sense responsible to the community, there would be a sufficient check against any unfairness?—They are solely responsible to the community, and the public voice would be raised against any unfairness being taken of the men.

76. I suppose you have had no trouble at all in carrying on, and there has been no expression of opinion with regard to the working of the body you represent?—I have not heard of any trouble.

77. *Mr. Hutcheson.*] Are you in the position to state of your own knowledge that the Wellington City Corporation, almost immediately they had acquired the ownership of the tramways, proceeded to consider the claim for the improved conditions of the employés of the tramways?—Immediately after the acquirement of the tramways the Council requested their manager to bring down a report showing how the hours might be shortened and the wages adjusted, but before there was any possibility of putting the recommendation into operation the Council was cited before the Conciliation Board. Therefore they were powerless to take any steps in that direction with their men. The men have exactly got what was proposed to be given them before they ever went to the Board, and the Council are now considering the question of giving the same to their conductors, because they think that these men work long hours, and the public should pay for the services rendered.

78. The City Corporation was anticipated in a spontaneous and voluntary desire to improve the conditions of the employés?—Yes.

79. And they were retarded by the actions of others?—Yes, for a period of something like nine months.

80. Have you considered, Mr. Rounthwaite, provided the interpretation were strictly and severely interpreted by the officers of the department, how the provisions of clauses 18 and 19 would affect the various departments of the City Council, as regards the limitation of hours, overtime, or the number of working-hours?—I have considered that, and it was an omission on my part in not referring to it. It would be absolutely impossible, under the provisions of those sections, to act in the case of an emergency. It is provided that we are not to work on Saturday afternoons. Very often an emergency arises; for example, possibly a water-main might burst on the Hutt Road. We would have to put our men out there and work day and night, and even on

Sundays, to effect that repair. The same applies to gas companies and the Electrical Syndicate. It simply means the public must be inconvenienced, or that we must commit a breach of the Act.

81. *Mr. Tanner.*] You mean with regard to overtime?—And holidays.

82. *Mr. Hutcheson.*] Broadly, you hold the view that the work of the municipality is such that it ought not to be interfered with by cast-iron restrictions that might render it necessary for you to either cause serious loss or else to break the law?—I think so. There is no question about it. It has been shown that the Council do not unreasonably work their men.

83. You stated you considered the force of public opinion was sufficient to hold in check any abuses in the way of overworking the employes of the Corporation. Had you in your mind the idea that the franchise gives every citizen a voice in its affairs?—I had not that in my mind. I have had my own experience of the way in which the Council is approached, and myself personally, from day to day with regard to the interests of the workmen.

84. The real check is undoubtedly the question of the franchise, which gives every citizen, whether a wealthy man or a poor one, the same voice in its affairs?—Undoubtedly.

85. *Mr. Arnold.*] When your men work overtime—the tramway employes—do they receive any extra pay?—The arrangement is that they get time and a half for all extra time—that is, for work beyond the stipulated hours per week.

86. They work forty-eight hours per week, do they not?—Speaking from memory, they work fifty-two hours.

87. That is 104 for the fortnight, against the overtime?—That is so.

88. And what holidays do you give them per year?—Christmas Day and Good Friday as clear holidays, and in addition to that they have seven working-days in the year, for all of which days they are paid full time.

89. You employ a number of boys, do you not?—No.

90. Do you employ some?—In my special department we do not employ any.

91. As far as you know, there is no objection to this Act as far as it applies to boy-labour?—I quite approve of the Act where it deals with boys and girls up to a certain age; but to provide that young ladies and young gentlemen of seventeen and eighteen years of age are to be prevented from being wetted and steamed, I think, is making molly-coddles of them.

92. *Mr. Arnold* (to *Mr. Ferguson*).] With regard to the carpenters and others that you employ, *Mr. Ferguson*, what arrangements have you decided on for these; and, in regard to overtime and wages, have you any arrangement at all?—Oh, yes; they work forty-four hours a week, and after that they get overtime paid.

93. At what rate?—At various rates, according to the position and rank the man has.

94. Does the overtime commence after the forty-four hours?—Yes. Of course, in connection with this, if we came under the Factories Act, it would be very awkward for us in the case of a breakdown. Very often these repairs have to be carried out on statutory holidays, as that is the only way of managing repairs. No doubt it would be a serious inconvenience to us if we had to send away for an Inspector instead of doing the work. We are not a factory, and no local body can be considered a factory. If we are to be swept in under the Bill, I think the term Factory Act should be abolished, and some other phrase adopted.

95. Are there boys doing much work about the wharf?—There are only boys who work about the office. We have no boy-labour at all. We have two young ladies who attend to the telephone. Under this Act no girl can commence work before eight o'clock in the morning. We have to have one girl on duty at 7.30 a.m. and she works until 12.15; the other girl comes on then, and works until 6 o'clock. If we come under this Factory Act, we should have to amend their hours. I take it that if this Bill is passed, the provisions of it are to be complied with, or else ignored. I think there should be no legislation which should be ignored, and I take it that this Act would be ignored. The provisions of the existing Factories Act were ignored. It is not desirable that any local body should be put in the position of determining whether they will break the law or not.

96. I suppose, if you employed young people outside your offices, you could be brought under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act?—The wharf labourers have us cited, and we are going to the Arbitration Court with the case.

97. With regard to the permanent employes of the Board, there is no discontent amongst them, is there?—They petitioned the Board recently for certain things. The Board met them part of the way, and part of the way we did not.

98. You think, for your purpose, the Conciliation and Arbitration Act is sufficient?—Ample sir.

99. *Mr. Tanner* (to *Mr. Rounthwaite*).] With regard to your view of public opinion, *Mr. Rounthwaite*, do you mean to say that public opinion in any district would be sufficient to protect workmen from improper treatment—in small districts for instance—or do you apply that to the larger cities, where public opinion is more readily expressed?—I think it ought to be, and generally is so, even in the smaller cities as well as in the larger towns.

100. Are you aware that in the Public Contracts Act there is a provision to the effect that every local body in the colony shall pay the current rate of wages in the particular trade in which the men are working. Are you aware that such an Act was passed?—I have heard of such an Act.

101. Are you aware that a local body, ignoring the Act, is paying its men 5s. to-day, and none of them more than that?—I am not.

102. How much does public opinion stand for in a case like that, when the thing is being made a matter of correspondence in the public newspapers?—I am not aware of that case.

103. I am glad you have raised one point, and that is with regard to the Borough Councils and local authorities being made courts of appeal in regard to the reasonableness of the demand made

by an Inspector. How would that apply in the case of small boroughs with only a thousand inhabitants, and where the Council is manned by the few leading tradesmen. Supposing an Inspector desired that one of these tradesmen should carry out these amendments?—It is entirely a mistake. I am giving you a reason why the Council should not be brought within the operations of the Act—they are a prejudiced person.

104. *Mr. Barclay.*] I understand your Harbour Board is a very good Board, and tolerably successful in its operations, and so on, Mr. Ferguson?—Yes.

105. Your men, I suppose, are tolerably well satisfied with the right to appeal now and again to the Conciliation Board. You have no difficulty in filling up your ranks, I suppose?—No, quite the reverse. Men come to us, and the greatest trouble is in making the choice sometimes.

106. Now, then, under these circumstances, when there is a plentiful supply of men, and they are tradesmen, and you say they work generally about forty-four hours, it would make no difference to you if they had to work in shifts to comply with this Act, or anything of this sort?—Yes, sir, because the work could not be done in shifts. Supposing there is a breakdown, we want the men used to that plant and machinery for the purpose of doing the repairs. You cannot put on strange men. Men are willing to come to us for employment, because it is permanent work year in and year out, and they know they are not coming for a few hours.

107. Am I right in supposing, Mr. Ferguson, that probably the strongest objection your Board would have under this clause 30 would be to subsection (c), the weekly half-holiday. It does seem clear that you could not stop work on a half-holiday?—If the whole of our tally-clerks are brought in I do not know how we can carry on the work of our shipping—all our tally-clerks and storeman and that class of men.

108. Do you still maintain that, although your ordinary working-hours are forty-four, it would be impossible for you to comply with the provisions of the Act that say a person shall not work more than forty-five hours a week or more than eight hours a day. Supposing your ordinary day is eight hours, do you still say it would be impossible for you to comply with that provision, and, I suppose, there is the usual four hours they work on Saturday, and meal-time?—We do not trouble about meal-hours; a man does not work more than five hours without a meal. Take the case of a ship wishing to work through the night: under this provision we could only get permission for our tally-clerks and storeman to work by going to the Labour Inspector, and then we could only do it for a certain number of hours in each year, and practically we could not carry on. We should have to increase our staff enormously.

109. Is it absolutely necessary to have the same tally-clerks, or will not some of the tally-clerks who work during the day work at night?—During certain hours it is necessary. If ships have to work long hours then we exchange. If doing the ordinary work, up to 12 o'clock at night, it is necessary to have the same tally-clerks. We have to give receipts for enormous sums of money, &c., and it is essential that the men should continue on this work.

110. *Mr. Hutcheson.*] How would the arrival of a ship in a sinking condition, such as the ship "Nelson" arrived in at the wharf a few years ago, be met? How would such a vessel be treated if you are restricted in the number of hours you work?—It simply means that we should break the law, and I do not think it is desirable that we should be put in the position of having to break the law.

Mr. JAMES CARTER examined. (No. 22.)

In reply to the Chairman's invitation to give evidence on the Bill before the Committee, Mr. James Carter, an employé in the Gear Meat-preserving and Freezing Company of New Zealand (Limited), said: Mr. Chairman, I should like to say that I am representing the majority of the Gear Meat Company's employés, and that we seek exemption from the provisions of clauses 18 and 19 of "The Factories Act, 1901."

111. *The Chairman.*] The hours of work and overtime?—Yes. It will, no doubt, occur to you that, as I have mentioned I represent the majority of the employés, we are not all of one mind on this subject; and in order that you may thoroughly understand the position, I should like to explain what the minority is composed of: By far the largest part are slaughtermen, and they refused to join hands with us, because they are having their hours of work, wages, &c., settled by the Conciliation Board; and the tinsmiths are practically in the same position. That leaves a residue of employés composed of men who are not affected by the season. They are employed by the week, and get their time in all the year round. They see in these sections of the Bill the possibility of shorter hours without, possibly, a diminution in their wages, and they are therefore well satisfied to see the Bill go through. Now, with regard to our reasons for asking for exemption: Practically for four months in the year we are working overtime, for four months we are working full time, and for four months there is little or nothing to do. That is practically a broad classification of it, and that is what it will amount to. The effect of this section will be that not only will the men be unable to earn more than an ordinary rate of wage during the busy time, but the remaining two sections of the year would have to be divided between the additional number of hands that the company would have to put on in order to cope with the work. The real position is this: all these men are perfectly satisfied with forty-four or forty-five hours a week, providing they can get it; but they do not get it, overtime included. I do not know that I should do any good by going into any further detail. Probably any further information which you want would be better derived by my being questioned by the Committee. There is one thing I would like to say, and that is: I would ask you to place more than ordinary stress upon this application, because it is made by men who have been advocates of this Government's policy, and they are men who on no account would put their names to a thing that appeared adversely to them.

## Mr. H. WYNYARD examined. (No. 23.)

In reply to the Chairman's invitation to state his views on the Bill before the Committee, Mr. H. Wynyard, in the employ of the Gear Meat Company said: In appearing before you this morning, Mr. Chairman, we represent different departments in the company's works. There are many of us who have complaints, and the Conciliation Board may be asked to give us consideration in connection with our department. We work at the rate of 1s. an hour, and on Sundays 1s. 6d. an hour, and for loading 1s. 6d. an hour. For ordinary chamber work—working in the freezing-works, where I work—we get 1s. an hour all through. We have to work during the season an extraordinary number of hours a week, sufficient to keep us going for the slack time of the year. The main reason why I represent our department here is that if we could not get the longer hours during the busy time we would not be able to manage during the slack time. During the winter season some few of us go looking for outside employment, and we take what work is offering by the company. I can only speak as regards our department. Our idea is this, for the men to work a little longer hours in the busy season and manage to knock along, and not interfere with the outside labour during the slack times.

## Mr. ROBERT COLQUETT examined. (No. 24.)

In reply to the Chairman's invitation to state his views on the Bill before the Committee, Mr. Robert Colquett, fellmonger, in the employ of the Gear Meat Company, said: I may say with regard to what has been said by Messrs. Carter and Wynyard our department would also ask the Committee to exempt us, because we are practically placed on the same footing. It is only in the summer months practically that we have a chance to earn a living. We do not compete with outside labour in the winter time on any account.

112. *The Chairman.*] Practically the whole of the deputation's evidence is that it requires the overtime to be able to make a year's living, Mr. Colquett?—That is so.

113. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] What is the total number of men that are employed during the busy season, Mr. Carter?—In the four departments named, during the busiest month of last year, there were 230 persons employed.

114. How many are there that are situated like you are?—There are about ninety out of the two hundred.

115. Then the other 110, I suppose, have to go and get casual labour where they can?—I mentioned the fact in my address that both the slaughtermen and the tinsmiths would not join hands with us because they were appearing before the Conciliation Board, and they would not express an opinion on it at all. That would wipe out nearly seventy people.

116. How many of you are there that go outside to get casual work?—During the slack time there are 230 men walking about Petone and looking for work.

117. How many would stop about Petone, and how many would go and get work outside; tell me approximately?—I do not know.

118. Are there about fifty?—Do you mean to say, doing other work? If a man paints his own house, would you consider he was competing with a painter for the work?

119. No, I would not. I mean permanent hands like yourselves?—I do not know of an instance where a permanent man goes outside and competes with other men.

120. I want to know how many of the casual men go outside Petone and look for work?—The difference is between two numbers. At present the company are employing 160 hands, this being practically the slack time, and in the busy season they employ 220.

121. About seventy men?—Yes.

122. *Mr. Arnold.*] You say that the great reason why you object to this Bill is in connection with the overtime. You wish to work overtime. Do you get extra pay for your overtime?—In some departments they do, and in others they do not. I believe it is looked on in this way: by working a couple of hours more in a day during the busy time you can keep the work going without an extra man, and when they are slack it does not mean that there are so many to cut it up amongst.

123. And of course if you were not permitted to work this overtime other men would be put on?—No doubt.

124. And they can take a certain proportion of your work away?—Yes; they would cut it up to that extent so that it would be no good to either of them, and it would practically force these men who have for a number of years not done any work outside the company to compete with other men outside.

125. With regard to the other men that do work outside in the slack seasons?—They do it according to their necessity. Sometimes a man might be there for a month in the busy time, but it is not to be supposed that he would remain the other eleven months idle.

126. He competes with somebody else afterwards who might be having a busy time?—Yes.

127. You object to those having a slack time competing with you in your busy time. The whole matter comes from a selfish standpoint?—Undoubtedly. Our average work is considerably under forty-four hours a week during the year. In many instances it runs down as low as thirty hours a week.

128. Do you get paid for any holidays?—No; I believe now the company—for this last two years—have paid in some of the departments, but I am not sure.

129. What is your week's work supposed to be?—Forty-eight hours.

130. And these men who receive extra pay for overtime: does that overtime commence after forty-eight hours, or after the day's work?—Again I think that is different in some departments. It has been the practice in some departments for a man to work out forty-eight hours, and whatever overtime he got after that he got paid for. A man may make ten hours one day, and only six the next day; that would mean two days, and he would not get any extra for that time. Forty-eight hours has to be worked before he gets any overtime.

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



would amount to about £1 15s. Possibly that man would work twenty hours a week taking it right through the year.

164. That is an average of £1 10s. or £1 15s.?—Of course; that man would go out and compete with other workers.

165. *Mr. Barclay.*] You say the lowest rate is about 7s. 6d. a day: that would be principally the eight-hour-day men?—Yes.

166. That would be the same whether men put in the eight hours in a day or not?—Practically only overtime is worked at night, as in the freezing-works the overtime is two or three hours in the night or morning.

167. You say in the different departments the case varies: in some cases they give extra pay for overtime, and in some they do not?—Yes.

168. Take your own department?—In our department there is no extra pay for overtime, but there is less overtime worked in our department than in any other.

169. In your own opinion, is this overtime absolutely necessary?—In our department I should say it is not all absolutely necessary.

170. About the petition in the fellmongery department: could you tell us where that petition came from?

*Mr. Colquett:* It emanated from the fellmongers.

171. *Mr. Barclay* (to *Mr. Colquett*).] It was got up by them?—Yes.

172. Did they have a meeting?—Yes; we had a meeting amongst ourselves.

173. At that meeting was it suggested that this petition be drawn up?—Yes.

174. *The Chairman* (to *Mr. Carter*).] I understand, as far as the Gear Meat Company is concerned, there is practically no overtime there. You have to work forty-eight hours before you come on to overtime, *Mr. Carter*?—That only applies to the labourers in the fellmongery. After working for that period they get their overtime.

175. In the other departments it is the same way; they can work twelve hours in one day and have no such thing as overtime. Unless they work over forty-eight hours in the week there is no overtime—that is, so far as the weekly-wage men are concerned?—That only applies to the labourers in the fellmongery. They work forty-seven hours. They knock off at 4 o'clock on Saturday afternoons.

176. And in the other departments they work forty-seven hours, do they not?—In the other departments they work forty-eight.

*Mr. Parrant:* With the slaughtermen's department, if a man works twelve hours he is paid by the hour. They are paid for holidays right through the year in this department.

177. *The Chairman* (to *Mr. Parrant*).] There is no overtime in the slaughtermen's department at all?—No; not for the weekly hours. They are paid 1s. an hour. In the slack season they have nothing whatever to do.

178. *Mr. Hutcheson* (to *Mr. Wynyard*).] There are different rates of pay, I understand, in your department. You state in the chambers, when moving the meat about from one place to another, you are paid a certain rate, and when you are discharging meat to the ship you get another rate of pay?—Yes; we get another rate, 1s. 6d. an hour.

179. What proportion of the whole staff are employed in connection with the freezing chambers?—In their busy season there are seventeen; during the present time there are only about four. Our work starts at 6 o'clock or earlier; it depends upon the quantity of work to be done. After the meat is passed into the storeroom and frozen the discharging comes in, which is a heavier class of work; you have to keep the staff going at the other end.

180. Am I right in assuming the time of beginning work and the number of hours worked by the whole of the departments depend really upon when the slaughtermen begin—you are more or less dependent upon that department?—Yes.

181. *Mr. Hardy* (to *Mr. Parrant*).] Is it not the custom in the Gear Company, or in other companies in Wellington, to pay so much a hundred?—The labouring hands get so much per hour.

*Mr. WILLIAM CABLE* examined. (No. 25.)

*The Chairman:* I understand that *Mr. William Cable* and *Mr. C. M. Luke* desire to give evidence on this Bill. *Mr. Cable*, will you kindly give us your views on the Bill?

*Mr. Cable:* *Mr. Chairman* and gentlemen, we are clearly of opinion that the iron trade could not work under the provisions as proposed in this Bill. We are getting along very smoothly with the Act as it is in force at present, but we must ask you, gentlemen, if the Bill is to go through at all, to exempt the iron trade from working under its conditions. We are all, more or less, "machinery doctors," and if we are put under the conditions of this Bill it will simply upset the whole business of the country put together. For instance, we are not allowed to work on the Saturday afternoon, or Sundays, or holidays. Now, it must be apparent to you, gentlemen, that factory repairs are always held over to the time when the factory hands have done their week's work and are enjoying themselves. If the engineers are not allowed to do these repairs, then it simply means that the workers, instead of being able to get their steady work in the full week, would have to wait until the repairs were finished and then work overtime. For instance, where repairs would take night and day, say, for a couple of days, it would simply mean that the whole of these factory-workers would be idle for a week. Another thing, there is no provision in the Bill for the firemen in the various factories to be allowed time to get up the fires. If the fireman is not to be allowed to work for more than eight hours, it simply means that the works will only be running for practically three-quarters of a day. He must have from one to two hours to get up steam, and another hour to bank his fires at night. If this has to be done within the eight hours, iron-moulders cannot work eight hours. It is simply impossible for us to do repairs under these conditions. We cannot, in a great variety of instances, duplicate our men. Repairs in all the various branches are done by the pick of us, and it is simply an impossibility for, say, one blacksmith to



come on at 5 o'clock and take up another man's work. It simply cannot be done. For steamer repairs there might, perhaps, be only one or two blacksmiths in the whole City of Wellington that can do certain work, one in one shop and one in another, and we simply could not take an inferior hand and put him on this work. We object to the Bill, as I have told you, altogether. We are asked to pay, according to the conditions of the Bill, for thirty-two holidays in the year. Now, we simply cannot do it. That means 12 per cent. extra in wages, and it will simply drive any new work practically out of the country to a very great extent. There is not anything like 12 per cent. in new work, taking it all round; and then the repairing work, of course, will be entirely upset with these hours. So, gentlemen, I must ask that the iron trade should be exempted. You might just as well bring in a Bill limiting the hours of medical men. We are, in our trade, so far as machinery is concerned, exactly in the position of doctors with the human race. It will upset everything. In fact, I never know, as far as late breakdowns coming in are concerned, when I go to work in the morning what will happen during the day. A medical man or a manufacturer can reckon he will do a certain amount in a day, but we never know the moment a job will come in. A little job came in about 5 o'clock last night for the "Star of England," and if I had been prohibited from going on with that work it meant detaining that ship for another twenty-four hours, and incurring a considerable amount of expense. It would have meant delaying His Majesty's mails; and, in short, the whole communication of the country, from the farmer down to an owner of a ship, would be in a state of chaos, and the Bill must act very injuriously to the workers. I might almost say from time immemorial the workers in the engineering trade have been very well protected. I might say they have had all the protection practically that any reasonable men should expect, wherever they worked or whatever it was. It was ten hours in the Old Country in my day. It was time and a quarter for the first two hours, and time and a half after that; and it is the same here to-day. The men are quite capable of taking care of themselves. It is an insult to the intelligence of the worker to imagine that he is such an imbecile that he cannot look after himself. Last year we were extremely busy over this dredging boom. The hands came to us and said, "Look here, we can get so-and-so in Dunedin, but do not want to leave you," and they got their wages up all round, and did not want to go to the Conciliation Board.

Mr. CHARLES M. LUKE examined. (No. 26.)

In reply to the Chairman's invitation to state his views on the Bill before the Committee, Mr. Luke said: I indorse in general terms all that has been said by Mr. Cable, and I would like to set out to this Committee that, whatever may be the fate of the Bill itself, it is exceedingly necessary that the engineering trade should be exempted from the clauses referred to by Mr. Cable. Clause 18, limiting the number of hours to forty-five. Practically that clause means forty-four hours to us. It says, "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 least one hour for dinner." That means five days in the week of eight hours, equal forty hours; and beginning at 8 a.m. on Saturday, and knocking-off at 12 o'clock, means another four hours, equalling forty-four hours. Is it likely the workmen will come back after 1 o'clock to make up the extra hour to make forty-five hours? I want to show what the effect of this will be. It means thirty-two days per year will be given to the men, which, at 10s. per day each, equals £16 per man. In our business last year we employed from 175 to 180 hands, and sometimes as many as 200. Taking an average for the last three or four years, say, we employed about 150 to 200 hands. Say seventy-five were retained at £3 per week of forty-eight hours—which are our present hours—and our week was reduced to forty-four hours at the same rate of pay—viz., £3. Say we paid same for the six holidays provided in the Act, that is equal to thirty-two days per year per man, and at 10s. per day equals £16 per year, or £1,200. Say we pay forty labourers at 7s. per day per man for the thirty-two days, that equals £448; and say we pay sixty lads and apprentices for the thirty-two days each at, say, 3s. per day, that equals £228. Then there are the premises, plant, &c., lying idle for the thirty-two extra days, the capital value of which is, say, £25,000, and that, on a 5-per-cent. basis, equals £125. That means a sum of no less than £2,061, and I do not hesitate to say that the business cannot bear that burden. I am not going to say the business is going to close up. We are accustomed to hear a good deal of that sort of nonsense; but we cannot compete against the imported article upon conditions of that sort. For the last three or four years the two principal items we have been manufacturing have been dredging and dairying machinery, with the exception, of course, of repairs. On dredging and dairying machinery there is a duty of 5 per cent. Practically we are working under free-trade conditions, and I ask you, as reasonable men, to look at what the effect will be on our business, owing to the foreign goods coming into this market. Recently we tendered for a pretty large engine and boiler for a dairy factory; we succeeded in getting the boiler, because it was more costly to come out by way of freight. We lost the order for the engine, and the engine represents nearly two-thirds of the value in labour; the boiler only represents from one-third to one-half of the value in labour. The consequence is that that labour is lost to the colony. So you want to see what the effect of this legislation will be upon an industry competing all the time against the larger concerns at Home, which have a larger amount of labour and the longer hours. I cannot emphasize too strongly the statement by Mr. Cable with regard to these repairs. You will see how inconvenient it would be if we were to be stopped from meeting the requirements of nearly every trade in this colony. You have the sawmiller, who on Saturday at noon may have certain repairs to make, and the engineer has come in to effect these repairs then, so that his mill may go on at 8 o'clock on the Monday morning; and in some instances they have as many as two hundred men depending upon that machinery, and if that work cannot be done on Saturday it would have to wait until the Monday, and the hands could not go on with

their work. Repairs may take seven or eight hours. A steamer arriving late with His Majesty's mails may break down in the harbour, or outside, and at 5 o'clock we may be called upon to make these repairs. One cannot go to the department at 5 o'clock to get a permit, and we therefore work on, and must evade the Act. You cannot duplicate the hands. We cannot take up a certain piece of work, carry it on to a certain stage, and then let another man come in and take it up and carry it to a conclusion. That cannot be done in our trade. Then there is the question as regards the dining-room. It would be most inconvenient for an engineering firm to provide a dining-room. Most of the engineering shops have a large area of open space, and for the most part the men and lads prefer going out into the sunshine to eat their lunch, and then to have a game of football and exercise themselves a bit. And in wet weather they have these great open spaces which obtain in the shops to themselves. The pattern-makers' shops have fairly clean and open spaces in them, and the hands eat their meals there. I have put the main features in this Bill as it affects us before you, gentlemen. Our work has principally to do with repairs.

Mr. J. J. NIVEN examined. (No. 27.)

Mr. J. J. Niven, of The Spit, Napier, said he would indorse all Mr. Luke and the others had said in reference to the engineering trade, as it would be affected by the Bill before the Committee.

182. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] What overtime are you paying, Mr. Luke?—Time and a quarter for the first two hours, and time and a half afterwards.

183. Is that under an award?—That has always been the conditions of the trade.

184. Then, if the Act was so amended as to carry out what you are doing at the present time, you have no objection?—The present Act meets the conditions of our trade in that particular.

185. In asking to be exempted, you do not want to be able to make a law for yourselves?—No; we ask that the present conditions might exist, and they provide against any of these outrageous circumstances that might be in contemplation.

186. *Mr. Collins.*] You have no objection to it as it stands, the present Act?—The Court of Conciliation and Arbitration provides all that we want.

187. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] Have there been any complaints from the men as to the accommodation you have made for them?—No.

188. *Mr. Arnold.*] You say, in your opinion, Mr. Cable, the men are quite able to take care of themselves?—That is my experience, both as a worker and as an employer.

189. Have you a branch down South?—No.

190. Have you an association in New Zealand?—Yes.

191. Are you a member, and does the majority of the employers here belong to it?—Yes.

192. Have you any arrangement amongst yourselves with regard to the employment of a man who leaves another employer?—No.

193. It is not in your rules?—No.

194. *Mr. Laurensen.*] You say you object to the whole Act, Mr. Cable?—I mean the alterations in the proposed Act to what is existing at present.

195. You do not object to the sanitary regulations, &c.?—No. There is one point I would mention, and that is this extra £100 penalty for accidents. Well, I maintain, and I believe I voice the other employers, if the machinery is under inspection, and the employer guards that machinery according to the Inspector's ideas, that the Workers' Compensation Act is plenty powerful enough to protect the employé without this additional clause of £100.

196. *Mr. Bollard.*] You do, I understand, a good deal of repairs to the shipping, and repairs generally: agricultural implements, for instance?—We do very little in the agricultural line. We do a few jobs now and again, but the settlers will not wait for long.

197. If you came under the provisions of this Bill, if it became law, you could not do that sort of work?—Not without very great loss of time and inconvenience to the customer.

198. You mean you could not get the work done in the time?—Oh, no.

199. And inconvenience would be caused, and loss?—Yes.

200. You mean by that that you could not get men to put on as extra men. You are limited in this Act to a certain number of hours' overtime, and that is the reason why you could not get the repairs done quickly. You would not be able to put on a second lot of men?—You cannot keep men on the shelf. We have got to study our hands; and I may tell the Committee that to keep our men on steady work we have been taking new work at merely a nominal profit—simply to keep them about you. Repairs will not keep a shop steady, and we have to keep our men handy so as they can do those repairs and other work. We have to take merely a nominal rate to keep our men about us. Men will not work three days in a week for me if they can get full work anywhere else. Besides, the difficulty, as far as doing repairs for breakdown jobs, is, you cannot duplicate the men. The men having the ability or the direct knowledge undertake shift about. Take a heavy smith, for instance: there is only one in each shift, and the moulder, if it is a breakdown job, knows the full number of men to send. He must finish the job. It is impossible to go and get another man to finish that job after 5 o'clock.

201. Take the case of a breakdown in sawmill machinery brought into your shop on a Saturday, and you are requested to have that done by midday on the Monday, so that there would be no delaying, perhaps, one hundred and twenty men depending on that machinery on the Monday?—That would be simply an impossibility.

202. And the men would have to wait until it was done in the ordinary way?—Yes, if it took a week.

203. *Mr. Barclay.*] You mentioned something about giving thirty-two days to the men?—Yes.

204. How do you arrive at that?—Under the Bill the employer has got to pay for fifty-two half-holidays, and there are those statutory holidays. The others omitted Boxing Day, which would make it five weeks and a half. Payment for these holidays, according to our last year's wages, would amount to close on £2,500, and that is to hands—men and boys—who are not asked to work a single hour without they are paid overtime rates after their day's work.

205. Under what system do you pay your men; so much a week?—No, by the hour.

206. How do you make out these days would be lost if you pay them by the hour?—Every wage-earner in a factory is entitled to be paid for the half-holidays and statutory holidays at the same rate as he is paid when he is working.

207. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] You said, Mr. Cable, that you took work here at low rates so as to find work for the men?—We have to do that.

208. Have you that regulated amongst yourselves, so that one shall not charge more than the other—I mean between you and the other foundry-masters here? If a job is asked for and you, with a view of helping the men, which is very philanthropic, take it at a low price so as to find work for the men—has your other competitor an arrangement of the same sort?—We all have to do it.

209. You have that arrangement between you?—Yes, it is one of the evils of the trade that there is not sufficient repairing work to keep the various foundries going. I am talking about ordinary times. During the past two years we have not had to do that, because there was more work in the country than could be tackled. Two or three years back you had to take a job at merely a nominal profit to keep your place going.

210. You have seen in the Press that the result of this "combination" of foundry-masters in Wellington is sending the business out of Wellington, up country and so on. Is there any truth in that?—I am not aware of it.

211. Such a "combination," you will admit, might have that effect?—Yes.

*Mr. Luke:* In those particular cases you refer to, Mr Seddon, we were competing all round the colony.

212. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] It is done for philanthropic purposes?—It is not that we are philanthropic—were we inclined to be; it is the necessity in the trade.

213. *Mr. Hutcheson.*] Is there a definite agreement between the ironmasters in Wellington about what rate they will take work at, Mr. Cable?—In some lines, but there are not two things in the market that you can fix any rate on. There must be an ordinary rate for costs. Perhaps a man will want a 25-horse power engine this week and some 50 or heavier horse power engine next week.

*Mr. Luke:* In nine-tenths of the trade you cannot have a schedule, and in other places there is a schedule.

214. *Mr. Hardy.*] Is there a "combination" amongst the employers that the men are to be kept on, or is it merely a circumstance of the trade in which each employer deals for himself?—Simply a circumstance in the trade.

215. Is there no "combination" that you are to keep your men on?—It is to our real social benefit that we have the men. This refers, I may tell you, to our highest paid men only. The ordinary five-eighths tradesman has got to take his chance.

216. You have to keep your men round you, and in order to keep your men you have to take work that does not pay you?—Yes.

Mr. PETER HUTSON examined. (No. 28.)

In reply to the Chairman's invitation to state his views on the Bill before the Committee, Mr. Peter Hutson, as representing the clay-workers, said: I would like to say, like the previous speakers, that, as far as the hours in this new Factories Act are concerned, it is simply an impossibility for us to work under them. In our particular trade we are on a par with the gas-works and the meat-works, or freezing companies. Where there are large works similar to what I have and others in the colony, we have to continually work on night and day, especially in our kiln-work. There is no provision made here in this Act for that. The overtime would not suit us in any shape or form; and, moreover, the Act states that the full week shall be forty-five hours. We have men that have to work seven days a week, and we cannot possibly do without it. I tried to work my men in shifts, but at the same time there is a Sunday coming in, and somebody has got to work, and if we do not carry on those kilns continuously some of the men would have to stand still. It is a system of work that can only be carried on by a continuous system of work. In my case I have five kilns running, and with regard to those five kilns, if any one of those five kilns got out of repair, we would have to stop the work, and some of the men would have to cease work until that kiln got repaired, and was made fit to run again. Therefore, under the hours stipulated here in this Act, we cannot possibly carry on our business. Then with regard to the extra cost this Bill will inflict upon us in the matter of our overtime for working and the pay for holidays; it means about 12½ per cent. extra cost on our output. That is impossible in the main department I am endeavouring to carry on, and it simply means if this Bill became law I should have to close down, and could not carry on at all. In speaking to that particular point, I am trying to foster what should be one of the largest industries in this colony—viz., the pottery business; and I believe I am the only one to-day that is manufacturing real pottery suitable to our markets, and there is thousands of pounds' worth coming to this colony, which ought to be manufactured within the boundary of this colony, and if this Bill is carried into effect it simply means the imported article will compete against the article made by the manufacturers in this colony. For years we have been trying to develop and foster industries in this colony, and individually I have tried to do so, and I may state I have been far more successful than a good many in the fostering of the pottery trade. It seems to me, after ten years' experience, where I can see the possibility of trade developing a

very large industry, that this Bill will simply cripple it, and the whole of my efforts are thrown away. I am contemplating making an addition to the works, and where I should increase my hands during the next six months by at least twenty, and the possibility of more within the space of two years—but under the conditions of this Bill I am blocked from increasing—to perhaps two hundred. It would be simply ruin to me. I know I could find room on some of the commonest lines imported into this colony for five hundred hands, and I can prove it by facts and figures. I am speaking on behalf the potteries, but in the other industries—such as the brickmakers and pipemakers—these hours would be perfectly unworkable for them to carry on and for them to keep their men steadily employed. We cannot possibly carry on unless allowed a continuous run of our works. We cannot possibly comply with the Act. There is a larger demand continually creeping in for sanitary repairs, and we have been able to hold our own so far without stopping. When the Wellington sewerage contract was on, it was by a very narrow margin that we got the order here, but put this Bill into force and they can flood us from New South Wales and elsewhere.

217. *Mr. Barclay.*] Do you pay your men so much a week, or by the hour?—Generally by the week; some are paid by the hour. We have so many classes in our works that it is almost impossible to pay them alike. I do not believe in piece-work, but this Bill would drive any man to work at piece-work. Our hands are all classed according to their abilities.

218. And your works are going night and day?—Yes.

219. You work them in shifts?—No, in this way: there are men that are always at their eight hours; a man comes on at 4 o'clock in the afternoon and works until 12 o'clock; the other man goes on at 12 o'clock and works until 8. You do not give me scope under the Bill for my firemen—seven hours. Another point bears a lot on our work, and that is this: Our kilns are affected the same as gas repairs. If something happens and one of our kilns breaks down, we have to work at night up to 7 or 8 o'clock to get that kiln in fire. If she is not in fire and taking her place in rotation, where is the kiln behind her? It simply means that some one has to stand off—the fire is our master. We can stock a certain quantity, and if we cannot work overtime to get out that extra quantity we are done; though I do not believe in overtime; I would sooner pay my men 6d. an hour to get the work done before 5 o'clock; but we must have overtime unless the whole thing is blocked. Sometimes on Saturdays we have to work overtime. I do not object so much to the hours so long as we could have the privilege of working overtime.

220. *Mr. Laurenson.*] You say you have got to compete against the imported article?—Yes.

221. The freight and duty makes it cost about 100 per cent. at the very lowest. Is not that enough protection for you to bid against almost anything?—No; our labour costs us 155 per cent. as against what the manufacturer that makes it at Home pays. The labour is a very small item at Home.

222. That is, you pay 155 per cent. more than in England?—Yes.

223. What do you pay here?—The lowest paid potterer here gets his 10s. a day, and the highest paid potterer does not make more than 3s. 6d. at Home. It is chiefly done with boy- and girl-labour at Home. And yet we could make every single thing we import if we had the least little protection in regard to the hours of work and labour.

224. *Mr. Arnold.*] Do you employ anything else but adult male labour?—Yes, there are boys.

225. You have a number of boys?—Yes; there are, to my belief, seventeen boys between the age of fifteen and twenty.

226. And you are quite satisfied with this Act as far as it applies to the boys?—Yes.

Mr. WILLIAM CHALMERS examined. (No. 29.)

In reply to the Chairman's invitation to state his views on the Bill before the Committee, Mr. Chalmers said: I would ask that the coopers should be exempt from the operations of this Act altogether. I may tell you that I have, I believe, one of the finest cooperage plants, if not the finest, in the Australian Colonies, and manufacture the whole of my output in three months, yet it is extended over the twelve months. In the busy season it is impossible to get the coopers in order to cope with the manufacturing. This year for the first time in sixteen years we have not had to work every day; we could not keep the meat companies going at Ngahauranga last season; if we had stopped one day we would have blocked the whole of the Ngahauranga works. In the Gear Company's works it would not so much matter with cases. Unless the Ngahauranga works can fill their digesters the whole of their works are stopped. We were running simply neck-and-neck. I applied to the Labour Department to get me good men, and they advertised in the whole of New Zealand, and sent their agent of Auckland round in New Plymouth too, but could not get me the men. In the butter-box making, which is mostly made by lads, there is a great difficulty in getting hands. I advertised in the beginning of last season in New Plymouth for hands, and did not get a solitary reply. I had to get Mr. Young to get me two young lads between seventeen and eighteen years of age down from Palmerston North. They work at piece-work, but some boys I have here will not work by piece-work. The boys are paid 6s. 6d. per hundred for finishing right off. They can do from eighty to a hundred and twenty a day, and that is not a bad wage for a boy of that age. The difficulty is that we cannot get these boys to come and make boxes. They do not seem to care a rap whether they work or not. When you get a few good lads you have got to nurse them, and actually make pets of them. The objection that I have to the Bill is in restricting the hours of manual labour. With regard to my men—and there are sometimes about nine men there—the fastest earn as high as 15s. and 16s. a day, and the old men, between sixty and seventy, earn perhaps a couple of guineas a week. At the present time I have only five coopers. The regular men earn up to 12s. 6d. per day, and the old men earn from £1 5s. to £1 15s. per week—they certainly do not earn an average wage; this is the slack season. In March, the busiest month last year, I employed fifty-one hands, and in March of this year only thirty-three. I have

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

forty-eight hours it will increase the cost of production, we do not think there would be any increase in the cost of any particular article. We are of opinion that if working the eight hours the men would be more content than at present, and we are fairly of opinion that nearly the same quantity of work would be turned out as is done under the forty-eight hours. The latest report of the 'eight-hours' system appears in the Government monthly return of the *Labour Journal* of September, 1900. You will find there, sir, it refers to the great success of the eight-hours system at the Thames Ironworks. It says: "Every believer in the eight-hours movement will rejoice to learn that at the Thames Ironworks the adoption of an eight-hours day continues to prove a grand success. Some remarkable facts and figures concerning the matter were given recently, on the occasion of the eighth annual festival of the Thames Ironworks Federated Clubs, which was held at the Town Hall, Canning Town. In presenting the prizes to the successful competitors, Mr. A. F. Mills congratulated his hearers on having passed through a most successful year, and upon having sufficient work before them to keep the yard busy for three years to come. Mr. Mills referred to the fact that seven years ago they had just passed through a period when the whole neighbourhood seemed infected with strikes, and when the Thames Ironworks had had eighteen months of continuous strife with everybody engaged in the yard. The only pleasant recollection, Mr. Mills said, he had of that time was, that the men did not get the better of him—(laughter)—and he mentioned this as an answer to the charge which was always brought against him, that the concessions given were the result of pressure. But, after all this fighting, he turned his attention to the project of making the Thames Ironworks known as the place where the best battleships in the world were built. (Cheers.) So, in 1892, he decided that everybody should have an interest in the work that he did, by means of a good-fellowship dividend, which should depend upon the realised profits of the firm. In 1892 the amount distributed was £4,804, and in 1898 it was £15,390. During the seven years—1892-98—it amounted to £42,519. (Cheers.) This was in addition to the highest wages in the trade in this or in any other country for an eight-hours day. (Loud cheers.) In 1894 he decided to introduce an eight-hours day. In 1893 the wages paid were £99,066, and in 1898 they were £242,336. In seven years there had been an increase of wages paid of 145 per cent., which was a very remarkable testimony to the working of the eight-hours day, and showed that the work done was becoming more profitable. He had taken out the net cash per ton of five vessels built for the Government before the eight-hours day had been introduced, and the cost for two Japanese battleships, and a cruiser for the British Government after, and he found that the latter were built at a cost per ton of 17 or 18 per cent. less than the former. (Cheers.) And during the past two months the Thames Ironworks had, in open competition, secured work at a price which was the lowest put in by any firm. (Cheers.) So greatly had their business increased that they had taken a yard over the river to which they intended to transfer the eight-hours flag, which had brought nothing but blessing on them since it had been adopted. It had proved good for the men, good for the work, and good for the shareholders." That is just one fact where it has been proved—and others can be quoted—where by working eight hours instead of nine it is proof that it will not add to the cost of production by knocking off three hours per week. We have heard it urged that by working short hours it is going to increase the cost of production, and that article proves that it is not going to do so. Take section (b) of the clause: "A person shall not be employed in or about a factory for more than eight hours, excluding meal-times, in any one day." My union are of opinion that eight hours is a fair thing, and that one hour for dinner should be established under the Factories Act. At the present time in a great many indoor factories, the employés are only getting half an hour for dinner. We have tried it, and find it is not conducive to the best health of the men; that there is not time to have your dinner, and you are not in a fit state to go on with your work, as if you had had a proper hour, and gone out to a restaurant and got your dinner as ordinary beings. When you are working a plough team, you do not feed horses as fast as you can get it into them, but give them time to digest their food. We are asking that an hour in all factories should be allowed employés for their dinner. There is clause 19 lower down, where it says, "The prescribed number of working-hours may from time to time be extended, but not more than three hours in any day; or more than two days in any week; or more than thirty days in any year; or on any holiday or half-holiday. On every such occasion, a person shall not be employed more than four hours continuously without having an interval of at least half an hour for rest and refreshment. Every person who is employed during such extended hours under this section shall be paid therefore at half as much again as the ordinary rate: Provided that when the ordinary rate is by time- and not by piece-work the overtime rate shall not be less than sixpence per hour for those persons whose ordinary wages do not exceed ten shillings a week, and ninepence per hour for all other persons so employed; and shall be paid at the first regular pay-day thereafter. The occupier of a factory shall at all times keep a record-book called "the overtime-book," wherein shall be entered a correct record showing, in the case of each person who is employed during such extended hours under this section, the names of the assistant and the respective dates and periods of such employment. The overtime-book shall at all times be open to the inspection of the persons employed, and of the Inspector. The Inspector may at any time require the occupier to verify the entries in the overtime-book by statutory declaration in such form as may be prescribed by regulations." Take where it refers to the prescribed number of working-hours—eight—which may be extended from time to time. We are of opinion that if the number of days to be worked in one year as overtime was fixed at thirty days, it would prove sufficient. We are of opinion that in section (b) that "only able to work two days in one week," should be altered in some way. We think if we are allowed to work thirty days—and we are satisfied that it should be, say, thirty days overtime in the year—we do not think only two days in each week should be sufficient. If we are allowed to work the thirty days, we should be allowed to work that time when the work has to be



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.



10. I take it that you are speaking as a worker, and also as a representative of the Typographical Society and other unions?—Yes.

11. You also see in subsection (b) that you are not permitted to work more than eight hours, excluding meal-times, in any one day, and also in subsection (c) for more than four hours continuously without an interval of, at least, one hour for dinner?—Yes.

12. Will you suggest to the Committee how you are going to work for forty-five hours a week by five eight-hours spells and a four-hours spell: would you suggest knocking off at 12 on Saturday, and beginning another hour after 1 o'clock?—I see the point, and, of course, from the workers' point of view, we would suggest 12 o'clock instead of 1 o'clock. So as not to curtail the hours, the workers have considered this matter, and on the one half-holiday, when they are going to cease work, they would be prepared to work that extra hour then.

13. It is a mathematical puzzle in the subclause: how are you going to work forty-five hours in a week by working five eight-hour days and one four-hour day? We all recognise that 12 o'clock is the proper stopping-time on Saturday, and the Bill says you will have to stop at 12 o'clock?—At the present time most factories work until 1 o'clock on Saturday. They do not complain, because they have not to work the other three hours in the week.

14. I want you to help the Committee to solve what appears to be a mathematical puzzle: how can you work forty-five hours a week under the limitation of eight hours a day for five days and a four-hours spell on Saturday?—I do not know, sir.

15. You also suggested that time and a quarter would be sufficient penalty, within certain busy seasons of the year, by the way of a preventative against the indoor working of overtime. That is the custom in your trade, time and a quarter, is it not?—It has been so for a long time.

16. Do you know of any other trades where the custom is time and a half?—Yes; I think the tinsmiths and the plumbers get time and a half.

17. Do you know of any trade where it is the custom to pay time and a quarter until midnight, and time and a half afterwards?—Yes; in the carpentering trade.

18. Do you think by fixing a minimum amount of overtime—to time and a half, say—would not that bring it down?—After working three hours, it is a matter of arrangement whether the men get time and a half or double time.

19. Do you know any other trades, besides those you mentioned, where the three hours overtime in any one night would be absolutely useless? You might as well not work overtime at all. Take those dependent upon the coming and going of ships to repair their breakdowns, and such as that: do you know where the three hours would be quite useless unless the men could continue on further. They might as well not begin at all?—It is a third of a day, and it is doing a third of a day's work on the top of another day if a man has to work three hours' overtime after an eight-hours day. The employer is taking it out of the constitution of a man, and there should be some extra money put on for the extra hours.

20. It is the question of being arbitrarily prohibited from working more than three hours in one day. If a sailing-vessel came here from Newcastle with a number of sails blown away, and asked for a certain number of sails to be made between the Saturday and Tuesday, and you had men who were willing and anxious to do that work, if this Act passes you would be compelled to refuse that work, and the captain of the ship would have to telegraph to Sydney for those sails: do you think that that would be good for the employé and the employer?—The workers, in Sydney especially, are taking the same stand as we are taking here with reference to overtime.

21. Do you think it would be necessary to make exemptions in this Bill, from the hard and fast operations of it, such as in the case of bootmakers, where they are dependent upon sudden orders and sudden crisis of machinery: would it be necessary to make exemptions in that case? Would you suggest that a schedule for exemption of trades and callings might be made?—Yes, I believe it would be conducive to the workers' interests generally if such a thing was made.

22. To make the Act elastic enough to meet occasions such as this?—Yes.

23. You said you do not ask payment for holidays: do you know of any recommendation that has been made to the Government or any other authority asking for the holidays to be paid for in the case of males as well as juveniles under the old Act?—From my own knowledge, I do not think there is any worker or labourer that has asked for the payment of holidays.

24. You say that no overtime ought to be allowed on holidays. While admitting that that might be, and undoubtedly is, the right thing in some trades, again I ask, can you imagine urgent cases where it might be unavoidably necessary?—I can.

25. Again, you would suggest the exemptions in the schedule?—You could put in a clause that by permission of the Factory Inspector certain exemptions could be granted.

26. The only two points in this Bill, as I understood from your evidence, differing from the old Factories Act are that you want to have the hours of the working-week curtailed to forty-five for indoor trades, and you want the hour for dinner?—That is so.

27. And, further, you would suggest that the holidays, as far as it can be made possible by law, should be inviolate?

28. *Mr. Arnold.*] With regard to leaving work at 12 o'clock on Saturday, you say at the present time you think 1 o'clock is the recognised hour?—Not just at the present time. To just within six or eight months ago 1 o'clock was the recognised hour.

29. But it is 12 o'clock now?—Under the award of the Arbitration Court it is now 12 o'clock.

30. And in other trades?—The majority of other trades, with the exception of the woollen-factory, work until 12 o'clock.

31. And there has been a tendency for years to bring it to 12 o'clock?—Yes, for a number of years. It should be 12 o'clock.

32. *Mr. Bollard.*] Do you approve of limiting the hours of overtime to three hours a day, or to two days a week?—Well, as a general principle I think three hours, after a man has done eight hours' work, which makes eleven hours, is a fair thing.

33. You do approve of it?—Yes, of some kind of limitation.

34. Well, suppose you were engaged in a factory and there was a large order came in which required to be executed within a limited time, and the hours of overtime were limited as you wish them to be, the only way that the employer could execute that order would be by taking on extra hands: would not that be so?—That would be so.

35. Do you not think that would be liable to disorganize the working of the factory?—I do not think so.

36. You think some of the new hands might very likely take the place of the old ones?—They very often do, if better hands.

37. Do you not think it would be better for the old hands to work more overtime than that the employer should take on fresh hands?—Not when the men are to be got.

38. Supposing they are not to be got?—Though you kept a man six hours, you would not get much more out of him than in the three hours. What you had to pay for the extra three hours you might as well have let him go. He has not got much more in him after working the eleven hours.

39. Supposing an employer could not execute his order in a certain time, and had to get extra workers to work overtime?—There might be a chance of a case like that, but it is very improbable.

40. *Mr. Hardy.*] You seem to be thoroughly in accord with the eight-hours system?—Yes.

41. You would not like it to be increased in any way?—Oh, we work nine hours on some days.

42. You expect eight hours' pay for eight hours' work?—That is correct.

43. When you multiply that by six, why not go in for the forty-eight hours?—You mean, work eight hours on Saturday. Experience tells us that every worker should have a half-holiday. If the law of the land says that it is good for the shop-assistant, it should apply to these indoor trades.

44. Do you not know that shop-assistants have to work a great deal more than eight hours a day?—They work from 8 to 6, and one longer night a week. This Bill does not apply to shop-assistants as it is drawn up, but I would make a suggestion, and it is this: the same trade would be done if the shops shut up at 5 o'clock instead of keeping open till 6.

45. What is your experience with regard to shopkeeping, and the profits derived by shareholders keeping these shops?—I have been behind the counter.

46. With regard to the profits, I am speaking of?—I can tell you the trade done after 5 o'clock is very little.

47. Is it not within your knowledge that some shops take more money after 5 o'clock than they do all day?—It is not within my knowledge that such is the case in the large centres.

48. What proportion of contractors are there in the boot industry in Christchurch—men who work piecework?—At the present time there are not any. It is all weekly wages.

49. And you say you do not want to be paid for holidays, but desire to be paid for half-holidays?—No, sir.

50. You are paid a weekly wage, and there is a half-holiday thrown in?—We are paid a weekly wage for a week constituting forty-eight hours.

51. Are you of opinion that the Arbitration Court is doing good work?—Yes, generally.

52. Are you of opinion that it really gives satisfaction on a whole?—Yes.

53. As some of these industries that Mr. Hutcheson has been asking you about could be injured by this Bill, would it not be better to leave the Court to decide the matter of hours in your trade, as well as others that would be injured: you have not lost by that in the Court generally, have you?—No; generally the principle of arbitration, we think, is a right, and a fair, and a just one.

54. If the Court were to remain in existence, would it not be better to leave this to their decision?—It might be better. But the Legislature has made hard and fast rules that the shop-assistants shall work from 8 to 6.

55. I do not know any law with reference to that?—The Shop-assistants Act says they must close on one particular half-day in the week. If it is good to regulate the half-holiday by the law of the land, it should be just as good to regulate the hours. One man will say it injures him, and another will say it is a fine thing.

56. You would not leave it to the Board or Court to decide this matter?—I think the Legislature, with the knowledge it possesses, should regulate the matter. I do not say it is better than the Court.

57. Is it within your knowledge that the representatives of districts fix the half-holidays in their several districts?—There are Council representatives in the suburbs round about who meet and decide which half-holiday it shall be in the week.

58. You have not faith in the Arbitration Court, that you would not leave it to the Arbitration Court to decide the hours of labour?—If we were to say we have not faith in it in deciding that point, the same thing would apply to its decisions on other points.

59. It is a good thing to bring employers and employé's face to face in the Arbitration Court?—Yes.

60. You are also of opinion that it would be a good thing to leave a matter of that kind to the Court to decide?—I think the country should be ruled by the representatives of the people, and that they are in a better position to know the wants of the workers and of the people generally, and I think they should be the people to regulate the number of hours.

61. Unless the tanners and others who bring their disputes before the Court, and it is local matter, and is discussed there—Is it not discussed there? Are you still of opinion that you could trust the Court?—Yes.

62. You agree, then, to what I say, that many of these matters would be better left in the hands of the Court to decide?—In this particular question we are not of that opinion. We are of opinion that the Legislature should regulate the labour right through.

63. You would not trust the Court with regard to yourself, but you would with regard to me?—We would trust the Court to fix what our wages should be, and the minimum wage.

64. And your time?—I think it should be regulated by the law of the land. Eight hours' work per day is sufficient for any one man.

65. You are speaking about a return which appeared in the Press dealing with the eight-hours system at the Thames Ironworks, and you said that under the eight-hours system they were able to manufacture more cheaply than under the nine-hours system?—Yes; 17 or 18 per cent. cheaper.

66. Had the introduction of machinery anything to do with that?—I think the machinery has a tendency to reduce the cost of production.

67. If a man invented a new method for manufacturing steel, would not that have something to do with the prices?—It might. In reference to the particular case I quoted, this was a great ironworks, and all over these works the men had been working nine hours a day, but on changing to eight hours a day these men found they could produce articles 17 and 18 per cent. cheaper than by working the nine hours.

68. *Mr. Laurensen.*] In clause 19, subsection (b), you say the Christchurch unions want this extended. It says there the overtime shall be limited to two days in any week?—If the thirty days a year is to be the maximum amount of overtime worked, we do not see that we could not work six hours a night when there is a rush of work.

69. If there is a limit to be applied, it shall only have reference to young people and females?—Yes.

70. You also say you are anxious to have an eight-hours day fixed by the law of the land, and a compulsory half-holiday once a week?—That is correct.

71. You appear here almost altogether for indoor trades: you are not saying anything with regard to outdoor trades?—No; most of the outdoor trades are working eight-hours at the present time.

72. You affirm that after a man has done eight hours in a factory that that eight hours continuous labour is very different to what a man does standing in a shop eight hours, where he is doing very little?—Yes.

73. The main things you wish fixed are the eight hours a day, the hour for dinner, and the overtime?—Yes.

74. *Mr. Tanner.*]—You say you are president of the Christchurch Bootmakers' Union?—Yes.

75. How many are there of you?—240, I think.

76. Indirectly, I suppose, you would consider yourself the representative of the federation of the four, or five, or six unions?—I can express the opinion of the majority. We are seven hundred strong in our union.

77. You are also requested to represent the Typographical Society and the Tinsmiths' Union, and practically you are representing considerably over a thousand workers?—Yes.

78. Have the bootmakers of Canterbury ever sent a representative to a Labour Bills Committee before?—No, this is the first time.

79. Then, the voice of the workers has hitherto never been heard before this Committee with reference to these particular trades, whilst you are aware that the Employers' Association have continually given evidence from their point of view before these Committees?—Yes.

80. You are aware an impression prevails amongst certain people in the colony that bootmakers are considered the most unreasonable agitators in the colony?—I believe that is the feeling.

81. And yet the bootmakers have never sent a witness properly commissioned to state their views before a Parliamentary Committee until now?—No.

82. While the views from the other side have always been before the Committee?—Yes.

83. May I ask whether this matter has been duly considered by the men constituting the Bootmakers' Union?—Yes. At the meeting at which I was appointed to come to Wellington and give evidence before the Committee we had an attendance of eighty-two members.

84. Was there any division of opinion amongst those men with regard to your instructions?—No; one man in our union who has always opposed any agitation, or any sending of people to Parliament to try and get our views before Parliament, was in this particular case agreeable, and they were all of the unanimous opinion that we should send a member here.

85. Then, the trade is exhibiting singular unanimity in asking for the establishment of the eight-hours system?—Yes.

86. That is, so far as it is applicable to the industries of the colony?—Yes.

87. You are not objecting to any trifling alterations where the hours may be extended in the case of merchants?—That is so.

88. Nor in the case of mail-steamers breaking down?—Of course, there are emergencies which always occur and which must be met.

89. Now, with regard to the question of overtime: Have you ever known overtime abused in the past? Have you ever known a state of things in which finishing-men have been found working all night? They have been instructed at short notice to get the orders away, and the next day have had nothing to do?—Yes, more than once.

90. Has there ever been a particular time when that practice was very much in evidence in Christchurch?—Yes, very frequently.

91. And something in the nature of a mutiny took place amongst the men, and that practice of substituting night-work for ordinary day-time was stopped?—That is so.

92. With regard to the question of thirty days' overtime in the year: as a matter of principle, may I ask whether you are opposed to overtime or in favour of it?—We form our ideas from the state of the trade, and I do not think it would be conducive to the welfare of any particular trade that there should be no overtime.

93. You are anxious to meet the employers at every point, and do not oppose overtime altogether?—That is really why I came up here.

94. Generally you think the regulations laid down here in clause 19—namely, "The prescribed number of working-hours may from time to time be extended, but not more than three hours in any day, or more than two days in any week, or more than thirty days in any year, or on any holiday, or half-holiday. On every such occasion a person shall not be employed more than four hours continuously without having an interval of at least half an hour for rest and refreshment. 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: Provided that when the ordinary rate is by time, and not by piecework, the overtime rate shall not be less than sixpence per hour for those persons whose ordinary wages do not exceed 10s. a week, and 9d. per hour for all other persons so employed; and shall be paid at the first regular pay-day thereafter. The occupier of a factory shall at all times keep a record-book, called the "overtime-book," wherein shall be entered a correct record showing, in the case of each person who is employed during such extended hours under this section, the name of the assistant, and the respective dates and periods of such employment. The overtime-book shall at all times be open to the inspection of the persons employed, and of the Inspector. The Inspector may at any time require the occupier to verify the entries in the overtime-book by statutory declaration in such form as may be prescribed by regulations"—will be applicable to the boot trade when there are reasonable rushes of trade?—No; the clause will not be applicable to the boot industry.

95. You think there should be some arrangement where the thirty days should be spread over the year, and worked at times when it is desirable, provided the amount is not exceeded?—Yes.

96. Of course, you are speaking of men in regard to this clause?—Yes, and not for females and young persons.

97. It is this consideration for the employers, and the wish to meet them in the utmost spirit of fairness, that has dictated the feeling that the payment for these holidays in the year is unnecessary?—That is so.

98. *Mr. Bollard.*] I understood you to say, Mr. Darlow, that this is the first time that the workers have been represented before a Committee of this House?—As far as my knowledge goes, it is so.

99. Are they not up-to-date, then, in politics?—Some people say we are too far ahead of you.

100. Do you think, then, that the workers have been negligent in not sending representatives here?—I do. In my own opinion it would have been better for all parties if we had done so.

101. Is it not a fact that instead of the workers sending men before Committees they have sent them into the House?—We have done so.

102. Does not that account for negligence in their not addressing Committees?—I daresay we have helped them a lot. We have certain representatives in the House, and we look to them to say anything for us that is needed.

103. Then, you consider that you have not been negligent?—At the same time we have been negligent in not sending men to the Committees. It would have been better to ourselves and to the employers had we done so. By putting the both sides before the Arbitration Court, and any one else, a great amount of good comes from it.

104. That indicates that you do not trust your representatives in Parliament?—If you could tell me that there was a fair representation in Parliament, and that the balance was equal, it would be right. But when we read that our balance goes down on to the floor, and the other side's balance is right away up, it is time we made a move.

105. *Mr. Hardy.*] You say again that you have never sent any representatives to this Labour Bills Committee?—That is, as far as the bootmakers in Canterbury are concerned.

106. Hitherto, then, you have had a fair amount of attention from the employers?—Yes, we know that the employers have had better opportunities to give evidence in all cases concerning themselves.

107. What is the reason that you are coming now to the Labour Bills Committee?—If you take this Act as it is now—take the forty-five hours—we have been agitating for years for an eight-hour a day Bill and we see it here, and have come to try and strengthen the Committee's hands to get it.

108. You say you have taken special opportunities of sending your representatives to Parliament?—We have taken advantage of the law of the land, and we have sent representatives when we have got the majority.

109. You are not satisfied with your representatives and your representation on this Committee?—Our representation is not equal with the representation of capital.

110. *The Chairman.*] Has your union considered clause 35. You will see there that there is a penalty of £100 imposed upon the owner of a factory under certain conditions: "If, in consequence of any such default as aforesaid, an accident occurs, causing death or bodily injury to any person, then, in addition to the occupier's liability under the last preceding section, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds, the whole or any part of which may, in such manner as the Minister directs, be applied for the benefit of the person injured, or of his family or

dependants if he has been killed. The penalty imposed by this section shall be deemed to be in lieu of any penalty imposed by 'Inspection of Machinery Act, 1882,' in respect of the corresponding default under that Act. The occupier shall not be liable under this section if proceedings under the last preceding section to recover the penalty thereby imposed in respect of the default have been taken and dismissed on the merits within one month before the accident occurred. Nothing in this section shall operate to in any way relieve the occupier from any liability which, independently of this Act, he may incur for damage, or compensation in respect of the accident or its consequences." Is it the opinion of your union that that clause should be allowed to remain in the Bill when the Workers' Compensation Act is now in force?—That was discussed. We saw it was in the Bill, and we thought under the Workers' Compensation Act ought to be the proper place for it.

111. This is simply the copying-off of a clause of an Act passed in 1882—the Inspection of Machinery Act. Since that the other Bill is now before the country, which gives compensation up to £400?—Yes.

112. As far as your union is concerned, they do not see any necessity for the insertion of the clause in this Bill?—No, sir.

The Committee adjourned until 10.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 28th August, 1901.

WEDNESDAY, 28TH AUGUST, 1901.

Mr. C. H. JONES examined. (No. 32.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You are representing the confectioners, are you not, Mr. Jones?—Yes.

2. Will you kindly give the Committee your views on "The Factories Act, 1901"?—Yes. I suppose that my trade deals more with juvenile labour than almost any trade represented here. Eight-tenths of our employés are juveniles, so that we should feel the curtailment of these hours very much. Our present arrangements are that we work from 8 o'clock in the morning until noon. Then we have half an hour for lunch, and go on working until 5 p.m. That makes it 47½ hours per week. I may say the arrangement for only having half an hour for lunch is at the request of our employés. They would rather do that than work until 5.30 p.m., as they generally have to come from a distance to their work. We provide a nice yard, and the girls sun themselves in it at lunch-time. The yard is all barricaded round, and is quite private, and they would rather have that arrangement than go out in the street and waste an hour, and work until 5.30 p.m. Our trade is a growing industry. You will see by the statistics that it is growing every year. In fact, this refers to the three allied trades—viz., the jam, the confectionery, and the biscuit industries. We have a great deal of difficulty to put up with in the trade. Although we have a good duty put on the imported article, yet we find, apart from that, it is as much as we can do to hold our own, because our own raw material is taxed beyond all proportion to what the imported manufactured article is. I do not wish to say anything against New Zealand girls, but they do not seem to want to work. When they come to work for us they tell us that their mothers do not wish them to come to work. Then, perhaps they will only work for a couple of days, say they are tired, and leave us. We very rarely get a week's notice from a girl, but if we want to get rid of them we have to give them a week's notice. Then, the difficulty to us is that they are so very slow. Only lately I had to import two hundred boxes of goods that we could make ourselves—only our girls were so slow. I refer to a penny sugar-pig; we made them last Christmas, but, owing to the slow manner of making them, we had to sell them at 1½d. each. The raw cost was 50 per cent. more than the imported article. That is the great difficulty with us, gentlemen, and it is almost impossible to build up a big trade under the present conditions. So that this curtailment of hours will mean our losing at least three and a half hours' work, which is no small item, taking into consideration the large number of girls we employ, and that we may employ. Then, take the injustice of this overtime question. Now, in connection with this overtime question, if one of my men is taken ill it is impossible for me to get another man in Wellington to take his place. I could send to Christchurch and Dunedin, but no man would come up for a week. Under the present circumstances I get a man from another department who is kind enough to work overtime in this man's place, to help me out of the difficulty, and to help his mate, who is ill, as well. Under this proposed Act, if I have exceeded my thirty days' overtime limit in the year, and one of my men is taken ill, I should be unable to call the other man on to work overtime in order to make up, and would have to engage another man from outside. Then, when the man who was ill came back it would be hard for me to tell him that his place had been filled. I think these few remarks, gentlemen, are mainly what I came here to say. We feel that it will be a great hindrance to our business to have three hours and a half taken off our week's work. Our work is not hard or heavy work. The employés are mostly sitting down at it.

Mr. P. G. HOWDEN, examined. (No. 33.)

3. *The Chairman.*] Will you kindly give us your views on the Bill before the Committee, Mr. Howden?—Yes. The gentleman who has just spoken represents my views with regard to the confectionery business, and what he has stated applies very much the same in connection with the biscuit department. Confectionery and biscuits are together in our business, and the biscuit department works forty-eight hours a week, keeping the same hours that Mr. Jones has stated are worked in his factory. The girls work 47½ hours. The girls are employed principally in wrapping caramel, and filling boxes of confectionery generally. Mr. Jones has just stated that he has a great deal of trouble with the girls, and he might have stated the same with regard to the boys. The boys and girls never give a week's notice to us. For the last twenty years I do not think we have had two or three notices given. A boy clears out in the

afternoon, and the girls do the same. We have had trouble all through, and it is a very difficult thing to obtain both boy- and girl-labour in our trade. Then, of course, the duties are very high on raw material—nearly all our raw material is taxed very heavily: sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound; gelatine (which is used largely in our business), 20 per cent.; and chocolate, 3d. per pound. The chocolate we get is really the raw material, and paying that duty on it makes it very hard for us to compete with the imported goods—those of a better quality, at all events.

4. *Mr. Tanner.*] You have complained that you are continually enlisting girls and immediately replacing them?—If we can replace them. We are not always sure about it.

5. I suppose you are well aware that you can insist on the week's notice being given?—It is not possible.

6. Have you ever attempted it?—It is impossible. They have something to go and come upon, but we have not, and our firm would be talked of all over the town.

7. You can dispense with any of them by giving them a week's notice?—Yes.

8. It is well known, then, that yours is a place where a girl can come in and clear out when she likes without recognising any mutual arrangement?—Yes.

9. And you have never taken any steps against that?—No.

10. What is the lowest rate of wages paid to a girl in your establishment?—8s. when we start them. A girl perhaps seventeen or eighteen years of age would be paid 9s. They advance very rapidly if they are any good.

11. There is no girl paid less than 8s. per week in your establishment?—No.

12. What is the highest rate paid to an expert female hand excepting the forewoman?—The highest rate is 18s. or 19s., and the average is about 15s. 6d.—that is, to a young girl about nineteen years of age. With this one exception I have alluded to, no girl works her full time; they idle away their time. They are supposed to start at 8 o'clock, but rarely get under way until 8.15 a.m. They are supposed to leave off at noon, but they are preparing to leave off at about ten minutes to 12. Then they have their afternoon-tea meal in their dining-room. They are supposed to start work at 12.30, but start a quarter of an hour later. Very often girls working on piecework will say to you they wish to knock off half an hour sooner than the appointed hour for stopping, and this disorganizes the whole business. It is bad for the others on day-work.

13. Does this complaint of leaving work at their own will, and turning up again, apply to pieceworkers, or both?—It is not so bad with the day-workers, because they have to toe the mark to a certain extent, but pieceworkers do not.

14. Are the girls in the habit of getting afternoon tea?—Yes; and if you make any remark to them they simply smile and go away. You cannot say too much to them; we are in their hands to a certain extent.

15. (To *Mr. Jones.*) Will you tell us what is the lowest rate of wage paid in your place?—6s. to start with, with a rise of 2s. We get a lot of girls who only remain with us for about three days.

16. Practically they start at 8s.?

*Mr. Howden:* The boys start at 10s.

17. *Mr. Tanner.*] What is the highest woman operative, with the exception of a forewoman, paid, *Mr. Jones*?—We have not got any girl now getting over 10s., and the simple reason is that we have not got any one in our employ that has been with us three months.

18. How many have you got altogether?—In the factory proper I think about fifteen.

19. And not one of them has been with you three months?—I think there is one. I am alluding to the big factory—we have two factories. In the other factory there are two.

20. What is your complaint with regard to the restriction of overtime: do you find your trade is what we call a seasonal trade, coming in rushes before holidays?—Yes; just before Christmas we are very busy.

21. And on such occasions you would desire to work as much overtime as you can?—We do not like working overtime; it does not pay us to do it. We pay our men an extra lot of pay for overtime. It is to our disadvantage to have to do this.

22. The girls do not work overtime, do they?—Yes.

23. You pay your hands extra wages, over and above the usual wages, for overtime?—Yes.

24. Does the same apply to you, *Mr. Howden*?—Yes. Take the case of the Government: Sometimes you want a large quantity of biscuits for a troopship, and it is absolutely necessary in that case to work overtime. We cannot help it, and it is necessary to pay time and a half. But we are obliged to work perhaps until 10 o'clock at night for two or three nights in the week. If this Bill went through it would be absolutely impossible to do that. Occasionally at Christmas-time we have to work overtime.

25. What is your opinion of the thirty-days overtime limit: do you not think that overtime worked on thirty days during the course of twelve months would be sufficient to meet your requirements?—Yes.

26. Is that the same with regard to your business, *Mr. Jones*?—No, it is not. I have never worked thirty days in a year, but no one knows what may happen. We may exhaust our thirty days in nine months of the year. In the tenth or eleventh month we may get one of our men ill, and then we cannot go any further unless we take on a fresh man, and give the man that is ill the "sack."

27. You have never found any occasion where the thirty days has been insufficient?

*Mr. Howden:* But the three hours would be insufficient. Take the present Act: I went down to the Government Buildings on one occasion to request permission to work overtime until 10 o'clock at night. I was informed that I must write an application. I did that, and sent it along by a boy. I was then told I could only work until 9 o'clock. That was useless to us after

starting at after 6.30 p.m. You require the extra hour. If we work overtime we want to have about three or four hours, anyway.

28. *Mr. Laurensen.*] You said, Mr. Jones, you are subjected to very keen competition in your business?—Yes.

29. Do you find that competition keenest from outside the colony or from inside?—I think, from outside the colony it is getting keener and keener.

30. You manufacture biscuits, jams, and lollies, do you not?—No, not biscuits and jams, but we manufacture chocolate.

31. You find the competition for chocolate and lollies very keen from outside the colony?—Yes.

32. You mean to say that the London manufacturers are keen competitors?—In some things they are, but in some there is a lot of cutting going on. But sugar was about £20 a ton, and freight into Wellington £1 4s. The competition from outside was more in conversations, chocolates, and jellies.

33. What wages do your men get?—£2 10s.

34. What is the smallest wage in the place for the men?—The smallest wage, I think, is £1 10s.

35. And the largest wage is £2 10s.?—Yes; the man getting £1 10s. I took on for the sake of charity; he was only earning £1 a week before he came to me.

36. You say, Mr. Howden, you manufacture biscuits and jams?—We manufacture biscuits and peel.

37. Where do you find your competition is keenest from?—From New Zealand, principally from Dunedin and Christchurch.

38. You find your competition keener from there than from outside the colony?—Yes.

39. *Mr. Bollard.*] What is the highest wage you can afford to pay to a girl that is expert in your trade?—I would not care what wages they were paid if they were really good.

40. What is the average wage—the fair wage?—I should think the average wage would be about 11s. 6d. or 12s.

41. That is the average in the factory?—Yes, for girls. The boys get the highest rate.

42. Cannot you afford to pay any more wages in your business than that for girls?—I have tried all I can to encourage them to do piecework. Originally we took what a girl did on an average day, and based her wages on that. Supposing a girl getting 10s. turned out a certain amount of stuff in a day, we call that 10s., and tell her that she can go on piecework if she likes. But the girls loaf over it, and do not do their work properly. If they did they would earn, as some one or two earned, 15s. They say they would rather go on day-work. They say they do not like piecework.

43. There must be something wrong in the trade. That is not the usual way with girls?—They do the same thing in Dunedin. Others work steadily for years. We have girls that have been with us now some four years, but they are only the exception. The great bulk of them are very inferior.

44. Take the girls that have been with you for three or four years: what can they earn on piecework?—One earns about 18s.; and the other is on piecework, and has been for a year or a year and a half earning from 13s. 6d. to 14s. She could earn more, but will not do it. They say they are on piecework and not compelled to work, and so they will not work.

45. I cannot understand it; the trade must be distasteful to them, or they would have more ambition in trying to get up to a higher grade?—I do not know why it should be, for they are very comfortable with us. Our establishment is a nice place to work in; the rooms are large and lofty, and the men, I think, are all polite to them. I think they like dressmaking better.

46. I was thinking perhaps there are other factories open for girls that they prefer?—I think, when the law compelled dressmakers to pay them so-much a week, they preferred to earn so-much at dressmaking than come into our factory. Formerly I had innumerable applications for employment—about three years ago—but since this law has been passed compelling girls to be paid in dressmaking establishments it is not the case now. I think the better class of girls probably go there, and we get a great many of the inferior ones.

47. If you could get good girls they could earn good wages?—Yes. Some of our men get £3 15s. and £3 10s., and the lowest wage paid to confectioners is about £2 5s.

48. If the girls would only take to the business as they do in other factories they could earn good wages, and, notwithstanding the competition, you could afford to give it to them?—Yes, I believe so.

49. *Mr. Arnold.*] You say, Mr. Jones, that you have never worked your girls overtime?—No, I have never worked them overtime.

50. So that, as far as the Act applies to boys and girls, you have no objection whatever to it?—No, no objection whatever.

51. Do you employ many men?—We employ, say, two tradesmen, and the rest of our staff is made up of the traveller, an outside man, and the man to stoke. That is all. Of course, I work myself in the factory.

52. How many girls are there in your factory?—I think we have about thirteen.

53. And how many boys have you?—I have two boys altogether. One is my son.

54. With regard to the same question, Mr. Howden, you stated that you applied for a permit on one occasion to work after 9 o'clock at night?—Yes; until 10 o'clock.

55. You consider it is absurd having to stop at 9 o'clock?—Yes. Ever since then I have never worked a single night of overtime unless we had boys over sixteen years of age, where we do not want a permit. I may say on one occasion we were fined for that; but it was through no fault of mine. The baker wanted to start at 7 o'clock in the morning in order to get everything mixed up in the machinery for the others to start at 8 o'clock. He had to get a few boys to start



at 7 o'clock in the morning with him. I said to him, "You must not have any boys under the age of sixteen." Somebody must have informed the Inspector, for the next morning he was down there at the works. A boy had got into the yard, and he (the Inspector) hauled the baker up before the Court, and we had to pay the sum of £3 10s. costs. This boy had never been at work on that morning, but he was going to work, and had not actually started. We were fined all the same, and I had to pay that £3 10s. as costs.

56. Do I understand that you are of opinion that girls and boys should be permitted under the Act to work for three or four hours' overtime—say, until 10 o'clock?—I never care about working a girl overtime, simply the boys. I never work overtime excepting in the biscuit department, where we are sometimes pressed.

57. Do you not think that if a boy under sixteen years of age works two hours' overtime at night, in addition to his day's work, that that is quite sufficient?—Oh, yes; as far as the boys go. I will not have a boy under sixteen years of age working overtime, because we would be hauled up.

58. Although on one occasion you did wish to work these boys until 10 o'clock?—I did not wish to work them. Nearly all our boys are above the age of sixteen years.

59. As far as the boys and girls are concerned, there is no complaint as far as this Act goes—that is, with regard to boys and girls?—Yes.

*Mr. Jones*: Of course, in my case, that is, with regard to the overtime?

*Mr. Arnold*: Yes.

60. *Mr. Hutcheson*.] What you object to in this Bill, I take it, from the general tenor of your remarks, is the new matter?—Yes.

61. Have you adapted yourself to the conditions of the existing factory laws with fairly reasonable success, Mr. Howden?—We have had to adapt ourselves to them whether we liked it or not.

62. You have proved by experience that the existing conditions of the Factories Act are not impossible conditions—that is, the Act now in existence?—We have to grin and bear it.

63. What you came here for is to object to the new matter in the present Bill?—Yes.

64. You have been through the Bill, I presume?—I cannot say I have. I applied for a copy of it yesterday and could not get it.

65. Have you read the Bill, Mr. Jones?—Yes.

66. Take the Bill and point out the clauses you object to, then?—We object to the dinner-hour for one thing; but we are willing to waive that, because it does not matter to us whether our employés have an hour or half an hour for their dinner. We are not calculating upon working forty-eight hours a week. I do not know of any factory employer in Wellington that is working the forty-eight hours a week, although we are allowed to do so. The highest number of hours worked by any one, as far as I can find out, is 47½. Then, with regard to the holidays, we generally pay the most of our men for the holidays, but we think it is not right to compel us to do so. If our men work overtime they get their money for it. When our engine is stopped our means of profit is gone, and I do not see why we should have to pay for these six holidays a year. With regard to clauses 18 and 19, it is all new matter in these clauses. Those, I think, are my present objections to the Bill. But there is one small matter I would like to refer to before concluding, and that is that the Inspector of Factories can bring any one into our premises from outside. We object to that, because we do not want any one off the street brought into our factory, because in our trade we have certain secret processes which we do not want disclosed.

67. Will you look at clause 35—viz., "If, in consequence of any such default as aforesaid, an accident occurs, causing death or bodily injury to any person, then, in addition to the occupier's liability under the last preceding section, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds, the whole or any part of which may, in such manner as the Minister directs, be applied for the benefit of the person injured, or of his family or dependants if he has been killed. The penalty imposed by this section shall be deemed to be in lieu of any penalty imposed by 'The Inspection of Machinery Act, 1882,' in respect of the corresponding default under that Act. The occupier shall not be liable under this section if proceedings under the last preceding section to recover the penalty thereby imposed in respect of the default have been taken and dismissed on the merits within one month before the accident occurred. Nothing in this section shall operate to in any way relieve the occupier from any liability which, independently of this Act, he may incur for damage or compensation in respect of the accident or its consequences." There is a provision in this clause with regard to the use of machinery?—That is with regard to the extra £100 penalty. We thought we only had to deal with one Act; when we came to the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act we thought that that would cover everything; but now with this new clause in this Bill we do not understand it. We find we are in for another £100 penalty. No one seems to understand it.

68. Do you consider yourselves held sufficiently liable under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act?—Oh, yes; and we consider this is a rather harassing clause in this Bill before the Committee. When a man has got out of you all he can get according to the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act he can come back for another £100 under this Bill.

69. You object to the restriction of only working three hours' overtime in any one day?—Yes.

70. And you object to being compelled to pay for holidays?—Yes.

71. Have you hitherto made it the practice to pay the employés for any statutory holidays?—Yes.

72. Have you also, at the same time, paid for overtime when it was done?—Yes; and, I might add, we worked overtime on Ladysmith Day, and our employés were paid for it.

73. You do not want to be compelled to pay for the holiday-time?—No. Sometimes we might have a man who might be a loafing man. We should not like to have to pay this man for all holidays. Up to the present time we have paid for more than statutory holidays.

74. Shortly, your objections mainly lie in regard to clauses 18, 19, 30, 31, and 35?—Yes.

*Mr. Howden*: I see here, Mr. Chairman, under this Bill we are obliged to give one hour for dinner. We used to work until 5.30 p.m. and give an hour for dinner, but our men applied to us to be allowed to knock off at 5 o'clock and have half an hour for their meal. Then, we always had some trouble when we had one hour for dinner. We have a great number of boys, and they would smash things up generally all round about the top of the roof, and break the down-pipes, and all that sort of thing. Then, if we turned them out they would go into the streets and annoy people, and these people would come in and complain to us. But ever since we have started this half-hour system they have not had much time to let their surplus energy loose, and to devote it to destruction all round. They have their half-hour for dinner, and when finished come in to work again, and there is not that trouble. We think it would be a great mistake to revert to the system of an hour for dinner.

75. *Mr. Hutcheson*.] Can you tell the Committee, Mr. Jones, how you can work forty-five hours under this Bill and at the same time comply with the provisions of it?—It is impossible to do it, because after working the five eight-hour days and the four-hour day on Saturday—the Act says you must have an hour for a meal after working four hours—you will find you could not work the forty-five hours.

76. *Mr. Eil* (to Mr. Howden).] You gave us an average of the low rate of wages earned by your girls—viz., 11s. 6d. to 12s.—and said they might earn more if they applied themselves to the work?—Yes.

77. What are the ages of these girls?—From fourteen to nineteen or twenty years of age. I think we have got one girl more than twenty years of age. She is about twenty-three.

78. With these low wages are the girls able to keep themselves?—We do not expect a girl to keep herself on that. Generally she has a father or mother, and lives at home.

79. You spoke of having some girls up to the age of twenty-three?—One, I think, that lives with her mother.

80. Do you not think that it would be very hard indeed for a man earning 5s. or 6s. a day to be compelled to keep children of eighteen, nineteen, or twenty-three years of age? You say that you are labouring under disabilities with regard to the tariff, and have also very excessive competition: you say the local competition is very keen?—We must put up with that.

81. This is a reason why, perhaps, you cannot pay a higher wage to your girls?—I do not object to pay a higher wage if the girls earn it. I approve of paying high wages so long as they are capable of earning it.

82. Then, of course, the value of your work is regulated by the amount of profit you get?—Yes.

83. If you could make higher profits you could afford to pay higher wages?—Yes; and we always try and advance any one of our hands that is really good. We want good people.

84. The fact remains, the girls are not as they should be in regard to these ages. With regard to the duty, you say you have a duty of  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a pound on sugar, 20 per cent. on gelatines, 3d. a pound on chocolate, and a 1d. a pound on jujubes and glucose?

*Mr. Jones*: Yes; I have known it at 100 per cent., and 25 per cent. on machinery.

85. You would be put in a better position, Mr. Howden, if you had to pay less duty for the raw materials for your trade?—Oh, yes.

86. *The Chairman*.] I think you said, Mr. Howden, you work your boys and girls forty-eight hours a week?—Yes.

87. Have you been long in business?—Yes, for about twenty years.

88. And how long have you been in business, Mr. Jones?—Only for two years here.

89. How did you manage to carry on your business with young persons prior to 1894, Mr. Howden?—We did not employ girls then.

90. You are aware the Factories Act of 1894 only allowed you to work young persons for forty-five hours a week?—I am not aware that that is so.

91. I suppose you are aware that there are a large number of factories in the colony that have still complied with the old law, although the forty-five hours was extended under the 1894 Act?—It was widened in its scope in 1894 to cover the woollen-mills.

92. Do you think that forty-five hours for young persons is too short a week's work?—Well, I do not think so; but I believe about forty-eight hours is a very reasonable time. I had to do it all my life. I have worked twelve hours a day and more.

93. You said you had been only two years in business in Wellington, Mr. Jones?—Yes; but previously I have had fifteen years' experience elsewhere. I have been with J. S. Fry and Co.

94. What hours did you work there?—Twelve hours a day.

95. So far as New Zealand is concerned, you have had no experience in regard to working young persons the forty-five hours under the 1894 Act?—No.

96. *Mr. Laurensen*.] What wages do they pay in Messrs J. S. Fry and Co.'s?—12s. or 15s.; but they were girls there who worked.

Mr. WILLIAM NAUGHTON examined. (No. 34.)

97. *The Chairman*.] You appear for the Wellington Trades and Labour Council, Mr. Naughton, do you not?—Yes.

98. Will you kindly give us your views on "The Factories Act, 1901," which is now before the Committee?—Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, the Trades and Labour Council have gone very carefully through the Act, and recognise that, while it is mainly a consolidating one, there are a number of new clauses inserted in it, and that they deserve the very sincere consideration of the Council before they would support them. Perhaps it might be just as well for me to go briefly through the

points that we object or agree to. Take the new clauses. In the first place, the Council very strongly support the interpretation of clause 2, widening the scope of the Act to reach laundries, and we support subsection (5) of section 6—viz., “Every Inspector may examine, either alone or in the presence of any other person, as he thinks fit, with respect to matters under this Act, every person whom he finds in a factory, or whom he has reasonable cause to believe to be or to have been within the preceding two months employed in a factory, and require such person to make and sign a declaration under ‘The Justices of the Peace Act, 1882,’ of the matters respecting which he is so examined: Provided that, on any examination or inquiry by an Inspector, no person shall be required under this section to answer any question tending to criminate himself.” We think this is necessary under the Act. Then, with regard to clause 10—viz., “Except as hereinafter provided, it shall not be lawful for any person to occupy or use as a factory any building, enclosure, or place unless the same is duly registered as a factory under this Act. Every occupier of a factory who commits a breach of this section is liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds for every day during which the factory is unregistered.” We think this is an excellent clause; we believe it is an excellent clause, inasmuch as before a factory is used at all it shall be inspected by the Inspector, who shall see that the rules as to sanitation are carried out, and that the air-space is sufficient. Then, clauses 12 and 13—viz., “As soon as practicable after receipt of the application the Inspector shall examine the intended factory in order to satisfy himself that it is suitable for the purpose for which it is to be used, and also that it is in accordance with the plan. If the Inspector is of opinion that the intended factory or the plan thereof is defective in any respect, he shall, by requisition in writing served on the applicant, specify the defects, and inform him that the intended factory will not be registered until the defects are remedied to the Inspector’s satisfaction. If the applicant is dissatisfied with the requirements of the Inspector as specified in such requisition, he may appeal to the local authority, whose decision shall be final. With respect to such requisition and appeal, the provisions of section fifty-nine hereof shall, *mutatis mutandis*, apply in like manner as if the applicant were the occupier of a factory and the local authority were the Magistrate. If, having due regard to the local authority’s decision on any such appeal, the Inspector is satisfied that the requirements of this Act in respect to the intended factory have been duly complied with, he shall, upon payment of the registration-fee as hereinafter provided, register the factory, and issue to the applicant a certificate of registration.” We support these clauses in the Bill. Clause 18: “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.” The Council have, in accordance with its previous requests for a number of years—for these last six or seven years—made this request. We ask that the hours be altered to eight hours a day and the four hours on Saturdays. That is forty-four hours a week. Clause 19: “The prescribed number of working-hours may from time to time be extended, but not more than three hours in any day, or more than two days in any week, or more than thirty days in any year, or on any holiday or half-holiday. On every such occasion a person shall not be employed more than four hours continuously without having an interval of at least half an hour for rest and refreshment. 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: Provided that when the ordinary rate is by time, and not by piecework, the overtime rate shall not be less than sixpence per hour for those persons whose ordinary wages do not exceed ten shillings a week, and ninepence per hour for all other persons so employed; and shall be paid at the first regular pay-day thereafter. The occupier of a factory shall at all times keep a record-book, called the ‘overtime-book,’ wherein shall be entered a correct record showing, in the case of each person who is employed during such extended hours under this section, the name of the assistant, and the respective dates and periods of such employment. The overtime-book shall at all times be open to the inspection of the persons employed, and of the Inspector. The Inspector may at any time require the occupier to verify the entries in the overtime-book by statutory declaration in such form as may be prescribed by regulations.” That clause says that “not more than three hours’ overtime can be worked in any day or more than two days in any week.” Well, the Council strongly support that. They consider that it is quite sufficient that the factories should only work overtime for two days in the week of three hours each. Otherwise there is a chance of the clause being altogether overridden by factory employers continuing for a certain period until they have exhausted the ninety-hours overtime limit that they are allowed to work according to the Act, and when this is used up there is a possibility of their taking on other hands. We know that this has been done in the past. Of course, that can only happen with casual hands—where a certain proportion are only on casual work; but still it is the custom, when they are pushed, to work these hands to the full extent of their overtime, and then to find out where there are substitutes in the same industry who have not worked their overtime hours to the full. We think that this difficulty could be obviated to a great

extent if the factories were widened and extended. We know in some instances where factories are not big enough to do the work which they can reasonably be expected to do. The Trades Council and those connected with it are distinctly against working overtime at all. No tradesman in a factory likes working overtime. Of course, we recognise that there must be exceptions made. For instance, if machinery were to break down we can see that it would be altogether to the disadvantage of those employed in the factory where it broke down if those who had the work of rehabilitating the machinery were not able to go on with it at once, and stop at it until it was finished. Then, of course, there is the case of persons dealing with perishable goods. I believe there is one trade which has already protested to your Committee, Mr. Chairman, and that is the sausage-case-making union. They are a union which deals with perishable goods. If they do not deal with their product immediately it comes in the stuff is ruined, and we, as reasonable persons, should make exceptions in that case. Then, if a steamer were to go out of repair, and freezing machinery were to break down, it is necessary that this should be fixed up immediately. We consider the overtime as limited in the Bill is quite sufficient, and we, to our knowledge, have not found that it does not enable the employers to turn out their work to time, and we think it should be rigidly adhered to, with the exception of making these exceptions for obvious reasons. We are quite prepared for that, and as a principle we think the least overtime worked the better. If we look round here in the city we will find there are men, and women also, out of employment. I know that in all trades there are men anxious and willing to take a job if it is offered to them. We maintain that, so long as that is the case, there is not the necessity to work overtime to suit those who would like us to believe there is. However, to a certain extent the Council would make exceptions such as in the event of an accident to or breakdown of machinery, or an emergency of that description. Then, we support subsection (4) of clause 19—viz., "The occupier of a factory shall at all times keep a record-book, called the 'overtime-book,' wherein shall be entered a correct record showing, in the case of each person who is employed during such extended hours under this section, the name of the assistant, and the respective dates and periods of such employment." The Council also supports subsection (2) of clause 20—viz., "A female, or a boy under the age of eighteen years, shall not be employed in any factory in which wet spinning is carried on, unless full and satisfactory provision is made to protect each of them from being wetted, and, where hot water is used, to prevent the escape of steam into any room in which any of them are employed." This provides for the prevention of children being employed at wet spinning unless they are properly protected. The Council also supports clauses 41, 42, and 43—viz., "If any person employed in or in connection with any factory in the manufacture, handling, or delivery of any bread, meat, milk, confectionery, or other article for human consumption is in a state of health which, in the opinion of the Inspector, is likely to convey germs of disease or other contamination to the said articles, the Inspector shall serve upon the person so employed, either personally or by posting the same addressed to him at the factory, a notice requiring him to submit himself for examination to a medical authority. The Inspector shall serve a like notice upon the occupier of the factory. Immediately upon the service of such notice the person so employed shall cease to do any work in the factory until he has produced to the Inspector a certificate from the medical authority that his state of health is not likely to convey germs of disease or other contamination to the said articles of food. If the person so employed does any work in or about such factory after service of the said notice upon him without first obtaining the said certificate, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding two pounds for every day on which he works in breach of this section. If the occupier of the factory, after service upon him of the said notice, employs such person, he shall be liable to the same penalty as is hereinbefore provided in the case of the person so employed. The provisions of the three last preceding sections shall, *mutatis mutandis*, extend and apply in the case of every factory wherein is carried on the manufacture, preparation, or treatment of any article of food for sale for human consumption. The Minister may from time to time, by notice in the *Gazette*, extend in whole, or in part, or with modifications, as he thinks fit, the provisions of subsections one and two of section thirty-nine hereof to any other class or description of factory, and in such case those provisions shall extend and apply according to the tenor of the *Gazette* notice." This prevents the employment of persons suffering from contagious diseases when employed in the manufacture of articles of food for human consumption. We also support clause 44—viz., "If in any building, yard, or place adjoining a factory there exists any nuisance or other sanitary defect which, in the opinion of the Inspector, is likely to injuriously affect the proper sanitation of the factory, or the health of the persons employed therein, he may, by requisition to the owner or occupier of such building, yard, or place, require him to effectually abate such nuisance or amend such defect within a time named in the requisition. If such owner or occupier fails to duly and faithfully comply with such requisition, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds for every day during which such non-compliance continues. The liability of such owner or occupier under this section shall be irrespective of his liability under any other Act: Provided that he shall not be punished twice for the same offence. The Inspector shall not issue such requisition until he has notified the local authority of the nuisance or sanitary defect, nor unless the local authority has failed to cause the nuisance or sanitary defect to be abated or amended within a reasonable time after receiving such notification. The provisions of section fifty-five hereof shall, *mutatis mutandis*, apply in the case of proceedings under this section." Our Council also supports clause 56—viz., "The payment by an occupier of any penalty under this Act for non-payment for overtime, or for non-payment of wages, or salary in respect of a holiday, shall not relieve him from his civil liability to the person employed." The Council also ask that the annual report be compiled by the Chief Inspector, as at present. We notice that in the new Bill the "Minister of Labour" supersedes the word "Inspector" in reference to the preparation of the annual report in every case. We think the Chief Inspector is in touch with the Inspectors throughout the colony, and, as his work has been done excellently in the past,

we think there is no reason for the change. However, the alteration of the word "Inspector" to "Minister of Labour" may not mean exactly what we think; but that is our opinion, that the Chief Inspector of Factories should produce the report of the factories, as he does in the meantime. The words "Minister of Labour" have been placed instead of the words "Inspector of Factories" in the new Bill.

99. *The Chairman.*] Do you approve of all the other sections of the Act that you have not mentioned?—Yes.

Mr. A. H. COOPER examined. (No. 35.)

In reply to the Chairman's invitation to state his views on the Bill before the Committee, Mr. A. H. Cooper, another member of the Wellington Trades and Labour Council, said: I indorse what Mr. Naughton has said, and would just like to point out one matter in connection with the forty-four hours per week. I am a bootmaker, and, of course, it has been stated by the employers in my trade that if the hours were shortened it would mean the output would be reduced, and consequently the employers would suffer. I might say that I think that can be proved to be contrary to fact. In a recent case before the Arbitration Court in Christchurch it was absolutely proved that in Auckland there are seven or eight boot-factories which have always worked forty-four hours and some one or two forty-five hours per week. It was also proved by a list of the names and a list of the wages given to the Court that the men were receiving the highest wages in several instances. The names and amounts of the wages paid were given, and the representatives of the Auckland manufacturers could not contradict one single item of the lists submitted to the Court, and, although they had been working under an arbitration award in Auckland which fixed the hours at forty-six, the manufacturers there saw no reason to change from forty-four or forty-five, and are still working under these hours. I believe an instance in reference to this question of hours has already been given by a representative of my own trade in Christchurch. He spoke of certain ironworks on the Thames River, and of the success that has attended the eight-hours system there. I might also refer to a large flour-mill owned in Russia, where the system prevails. In this case the man had worked his mill at ten hours per day for a large number of years, but some two years ago he adopted the eight-hours system, and in giving the result of his first year's work under this system he is more than pleased with the result. He finds his employes are more physically able to do a fair day's work than previously. The output for the year under his new system has been published in the local *Age*, and the output for the eight hours exceeds in every instance the output of the ten hours.

Mr. D. McLAREN examined. (No. 36.)

In reply to the Chairman, Mr. D. McLaren, another representative of the Wellington Trades and Labour Council, said he agreed with what the other members of the Trades and Labour Council had said.

100. *Mr. Hutcheson.*] You are employed in the Government Printing Office, Mr. Naughton, are you not?—Yes.

101. And you are president of the Wellington Trades and Labour Council, are you not?—Yes.

102. How long have you been in the Government Printing Office?—About ten years.

103. Is the Government Printing Office subject to the conditions of the Factories Act?—Yes. I think there are rather better conditions there than outside—in my own trade, anyway. The Inspector comes through the office and certainly inspects it as a factory.

104. Do they work any overtime in the Government Printing Office just now?—Yes; they do in the printing department. I am a bookbinder. We never work overtime.

105. Do they work overtime in the kindred trades—type-setting, for instance?—Yes; they work overtime during the session.

106. In the face of this Bill becoming law, do you think the Labour Department would insist upon the provisions of the Act applying to the Government Printing Office? For instance, in the case of printers during the session—that is, as regards the restriction of overtime in clause 19, and the number of hours: are they likely to break away from it?—I do not think they would. I think they would work in shifts. I think that is practically what is done now. They only work 44½ hours now.

107. Do you think it likely, whatever interpretation was put upon the law as regards private employers, that that would also be imposed inviolably and fairly on the Government Printing Office?—I think that men would be working overtime there in a case like that. At any other time of the year except during the session there is very likely no overtime worked in the Government Printing Office at all. But when the session comes on *Hansard* must be printed, and, of course, it is necessary to take on additional hands. One portion of these hands work in the night-time and one portion in the day-time. The Act would not affect the Government Printing Office in any way.

108. Most of the witnesses who have given evidence say they have certain seasons and certain exigencies in their particular trade, and that they want a certain amount of elasticity to meet that. The same would obtain in the Government Printing Office; it has its season, the session?—Yes.

109. Most of us will believe that the Government Printing Office would simply go on their way without any operations of any labour laws. Do you think all the Government employes ought to be subject to the labour laws?—Personally, I do. There is a difference of opinion in the Trades Council about that. There we are divided on the matter; at any rate, we are not absolutely satisfied that it would be better for the Printing Office to be under the Act. I know that the leaders of the Council, with the exception of myself, are very strongly in favour of the Printing Office employes coming under the Act. But, so far as I have heard and seen, we have not seen any reason

where the matter could not be controverted. I think that the Parliament should govern its institutions superior to anything that we have to arbitrate for. I do not think that it should be a matter for arbitration at all, but that it should be a matter of right and justice—although I admit that it is not always so.

110. There are certain restrictions laid down in the Factories Act that we have no assurance will be applied equally to all departments of the Government. Many of us know that they are inapplicable to many of the departments, and, with a view to inspiring confidence in the practicality and equity of labour laws, do you not think it advisable that the Government should give a practical demonstration that they believe the law to be workable by bringing in the employes of the Government? The private employers may have their exigencies just as well as the Government?—To a certain extent. I do not know the desire of the employers altogether in asking the Government employes be brought under the Act is that they wish them to obey the conditions under which they are working. The men in the departments of the Government are working under different conditions—and superior conditions, to the employes working outside. The employers are complaining that the rate of wages—and they have complained to me, and say it is wrong that the Government should pay more than they pay—is too high. And very often they put it the other way, too.

111. To come to the Bill itself: You have already told the Committee that your Council sees the propriety of making certain exemptions for the strong interpretation of the law—for instance, in a breakdown of machinery, and in dealing with perishable goods. But you probably may not know that this Committee has had submitted to it by nearly every witness who has made representations here similar applications for exemptions for their particular trades—for instance, there was the sausage trade, showing with the exigencies of their trade it would be impossible to comply with the Act. For instance, say a vessel comes in here with some of her principal sails blown away, and the master says he wants the the sails made between Saturday and Tuesday morning, and the local sail-maker sees, by getting outside help and getting his hands in the sail-loft to work extra hours, he can manage to take the order. The work could be undertaken and done under those conditions; but under the conditions set up by this Bill what would happen would be this: you would have to tell the master of the vessel you could not make the sails, and he would simply have to cable to his owners in Sydney to have the sails ready for him, and he would go across with his old rags. Then, this Bill deals with perishable goods and machinery: there is another instance. In the first instance I have quoted the sail-makers would have to walk the streets, and the master sail-makers would have to go into some other business. Do you still think the hard-and-fast restriction on the employment of adult labour should be incorporated in the Bill?—Yes, I am afraid so. I do not consider that altogether a good case, Mr. Hutcheson, because if those sails were so badly damaged, and the master of the vessel wanted new sails, his boat could stop until they were made.

112. Suppose his boat was sailing under an Australian charter, with an Australian certificate?—If we commence to make more exemptions than absolutely necessary we might as well make no provision in regard to overtime at all. Our principal wish is to limit overtime. We do not want it at all. We recognise there are cases of urgent necessity when it must be worked; but, excepting in those cases, we do not want to work, and we will not work unless compelled to do so.

113. You will admit there are some trades almost entirely governed by weather and by seasons, where if their work is not done at certain times and seasons it remains undone, is it your wish that the work should remain undone?—Well, of course not, I cannot say exactly that. But that is not the general case in regard to factory-work. The work that is undone the day before can be done the next day. It is just a question of whether every bit of work in a factory should be turned out immediately it comes in, or whether consideration should be taken of the employé himself, and whether he, after having worked eight hours in a day, is not entitled to have a rest, and whether the person who wishes his goods should not wait for them until they are made, instead of the man having to work three or four hours every night for weeks. We find that there is a tendency to work overtime when it is not necessary.

114. You do not know, then, of any conditions where the working of overtime imposes as great disabilities and as great hardships upon the employer as upon the employes, and is also regarded in the same light by the employes as a grievance, but is also regarded as inevitable. Do you not know of any conditions in trades where the employer is just as unwilling to work overtime as the employé himself?—Yes.

115. Would you advocate the Committee making provision in this Act to meet these cases?—No. There is just one thing in regard to the overtime, and it is this: it is just a question, if a man has worked nine hours a week, whether the limitation of three hours a day for two days in a week is not better than allowing him to work, say, three hours until his time is exhausted. There might be a tendency on the part of some employers—because there are some unfair employers—to take an unfair advantage, as some employes will do. You might take the advantage of it in a factory by working the whole of that time “straight off the reel,” and when another occasion came for working overtime the employers would take on fresh hands and the others would be discharged. The casual hand who would be in demand would be the one who had not worked out his overtime limit.

116. Does your Council consider it a very good thing to compel employers of labour in a small way to pay the Saturday holiday ensuing after the five days' employment in the course of a month, or any holiday coming along: do they consider it is equitable and just? As provided by subsection (2) of clause 32, which reads: “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." Does your Council think that that will work out in equity and justice in all the branches of industry in the colony?—Well, I am afraid that clause is a little stringent. I certainly think if a man has worked five days in the week that he is entitled to the half-holiday on the Saturday, and I think that is the mind of the Council in the matter.

117. You see, the trouble is this—and you know it perfectly well: that once a law is enacted it becomes drastic in its operation. That is the technical meaning of it, but the words are too often taken. Now, the case you cited might not be complained of. It would be easy to give him a half-day to enable him to work the full week; but a Judge or a Magistrate would interpret this clause as follows: Because he has worked five days the employer has got to give him an extra day's pay for which he (the employé) has not done a single hand's-stroke?—That certainly does not seem fair. But where men are working continuously in the service of an employer we think it is a fair thing that they should have a half-holiday, and also in the case where a man is taken on. There is some difference between a man who does work just now and again, and one taken on for a week or a fortnight. In the latter case I think it is a fair thing for the man to get the half-holiday, although I see the point that you have made. If an employer had nothing for the man to do on the half-day in the last day of the week, it certainly does seem, and is, a hardship that he should be compelled to pay him.

118. Supposing he only did two hours' work on the Friday: he is entitled to the two hours on Friday, and for what he did not do on the whole of Saturday, if he has done four days and six hours at any time during the month previous intermittently. I can hardly imagine that the Wellington Trades and Labour Council thinks that honest and fair?—I have said what I think about it. There are other members of the Council present. I do not know exactly whether they hold a different opinion on the matter to me or not.

119. *Mr. Arnold.*] You have stated, Mr. Naughton, that the workers as a whole would prefer doing away with overtime altogether?—That is what we have always said, Mr. Arnold.

120. With regard to your evidence concerning the Government employés: I understand that that evidence is only your own opinion?—Yes.

121. It is not the opinion of the Trades and Labour Council?—Oh, no. I said that it was my personal opinion.

122. And the other evidence is the view of your Council?—I would say that the Trades Council latterly has never passed a direct resolution on the matter, so that I could not sufficiently say that this is our wish—I am speaking on behalf of the majority of the Trades and Labour Council—that we are in favour of the Government employés being brought under the Act.

123. The other part of your evidence in regard to this Act is the opinion of your Council?—Yes.

124. Of what is your Council composed?—Trades and labour unions.

125. About how many are there?—Sixteen or seventeen.

126. Could you give us a rough idea of how many members there are in these seventeen unions—in the aggregate, I mean?—About eighteen hundred members altogether.

127. You really voice the opinion of about eighteen hundred men altogether?—Yes.

128. You quoted, Mr. Cooper, the case of a flour-mill in Russia: can you tell the Committee where to look up the authentic document in regard to that case?—I quoted from the *Melbourne Age*, but can forward the extract from the paper to the Committee. I have not got it with me now.

129. *Mr. Bollard.*] With regard to overtime, Mr Naughton, do you think that any employer is anxious to work overtime unless he is compelled to do so?—No, I do not think he is.

130. Do you think it is necessary to restrict the hours, then?—Yes.

131. Why do you think so?—Unless the hours are restricted the overtime will not be restricted.

132. You said it would not be to an employer's advantage that he should work any overtime: why do you want to impose restrictions on him, then?—I think that overtime work is unnecessary where an employer by taking on more hands might do the work without working overtime.

133. He does not want to work overtime unless he is compelled to do so?—He may not. But one can easily see it means increased wages—viz., time and a quarter and time and a half. But there seems to be a disinclination for the employer to make further accommodation in his factory in order that overtime can be abolished altogether. We find men out of work in these trades. How is it they are not employed while men are working overtime?

134. You say personally you do not approve of the labour laws applying to Government employés?—No; I do not think there is the necessity for it.

135. If you were not in the Government employ do you think you would be of the same opinion?—In my own trade the conditions we are working under are quite superior to what they are working outside. We work forty-four hours a week, and outside they work forty-eight. If one is in a Government department, and he is sick, and has been working there for two years, he gets a month's full pay and half-pay for another month, which is not received by employés in outside concerns. The Government employés obtain every holiday. They get all the statutory holidays, and get paid for them. That does not obtain outside in my trade.

136. I was referring to you as president of the Trades and Labour Council—that is, independent of your being in the Government employ: would you be of the same opinion?—Yes.

137. Simply because your own trade was not affected?—Yes. But there are a number of trades exactly similar to my own. The only case where I see it would be an advantage for the Government employés to be under the Act would be in the case of the railway employés and casual labour; they all get a certain rate of wages. I would not like it to be understood that I oppose it very greatly. I do not think it would make a very great difference one way or the other.



138. You told us to-day, speaking on behalf of the Council, that you practically approve of all the new matter in this Act?—With the exception of what I have indicated.

139. How long is it since your Council has come to that decision?—Six or seven years ago.

140. Did not your Council recommend this to the Minister of Labour to begin with?—A great part of it, certainly.

141. Then, your Council is mainly responsible for this new matter in the Act?—Not for the whole of it. It is mainly responsible for the reduction of overtime. There are only one or two parts that are of vital consequence. There is a difference between the proposed Act and the old one, and that is in regard to overtime and wages; and I may say, in regard to the reduction of overtime, that that is our proposal almost embodied, and for the last seven or eight years we have always asked for a forty-four hour week.

142. As a matter of fact, the Act applied to all persons engaged in the manufacture and sale of perishable goods?—Yes, it does at present.

143. Do you think that can be carried out?—No; I think it would be wrong to do that. We have made the exception in cases like that which we were pointing out.

144. *Mr. Hardy.*] What were the exceptions that you have made with regard to this Act about overtime?—We recognise that in some cases—in engineering, for instance—there would be exemptions. If there was a breakdown in the machinery in a factory we recognise that would be another exemption.

145. There are some others I want to know about?—The only exceptions are those that I have stated.

146. Do you know anything about creameries, and have you taken any evidence on them?—No.

147. Do you know there is more value turned out in the creameries than in all the factory-work in the colony?—No.

148. You approve mainly of this Act, do you not?—Yes.

149. And yet you have taken no evidence about one of the biggest industries we have in the colony, and you would desire that that industry be placed under the hard-and-fast provisions laid down in this Act?—We always recognise if an industry is going to be affected there are gentlemen to give their evidence to show reasons why they think, as a general thing, it should not apply to them.

150. Would you say you are mainly responsible for the clauses in this Act, and yet that you have not dealt with one of the biggest industries in the colony?—We had not an opportunity to do so. We are practically dealing with trades and factories.

151. You know this deals with all?—Yes.

152. Yet you have made recommendations about a trade you seem to know nothing about?—As a general thing, it will apply to us, and if there are exceptions those who are adverse to that particular trade being brought under the Act will take very good care that they point their objections out, and that the Act is not allowed to affect them adversely.

153. With regard to the Government employées, then, they are more favourably situated, as a rule, than those working outside?—Yes.

154. Is it within your knowledge that the carpenters in the Addington Workshops get less wages than are paid by the builders and contractors in Christchurch?—I have heard so, but I have heard the privileges that they get in the way of sick-pay and all holidays more than counteracts that, and that if a man were working for twelve months in the railway workshops he would be considerably better off than if working as an ordinary carpenter for the same period outside.

155. You have never worked there yourself, have you?—No.

156. Has it come within your knowledge that the people in the workshops have asked to be brought within the working of this Act?—No, not in Christchurch. I have been in Wellington so long that I forget about Christchurch.

157. Has the Arbitration Court been doing much work in Wellington?—Individually, it has not. The Conciliation Board has been doing all the work so far.

158. Have you any idea why the Arbitration Act has not been brought into force here?—No. The excuse is that there is only one Judge for the colony, and he has to attend to the Supreme Court work as well as to Arbitration Court work; and he only attends to Arbitration work when he is finished with Supreme Court work.

159. Do you know of many cases that are hung up in consequence of his not being able to attend to them?—There are a great number.

160. Have you made any recommendations to the Government and to the department in regard to that?—Yes.

161. And you have not been able to get any satisfactory reply?—Yes. The answer we got was that the Judge will endeavour to cope with the work as soon as he can.

162. Do you think the Court is doing good work?—Yes, speaking generally, I think it is.

163. Has it the means of collecting evidence and bringing evidence before it?—Yes.

164. And that evidence is generally placed before the Court in a fairly straightforward manner?—Yes.

165. Would it not be better to work under the old Act, and leave the Arbitration Court to do its work and enter into the details of each case as it is brought before it?—With regard to the hours, that is a matter I would not leave to the Court. I have seen a tendency not to reduce the hours at all.

166. Is it your opinion that the people that represent the Labour Council, and that represent labour, are as clear-headed and able to put their case before the Court as clearly as ever they did?—Yes.

167. Then, if the Court is fair, why should you not get justice?—I did not say the Court was

always fair. I admit it does good work. To admit it was fair would be to admit it was always fair.

168. You told me the Court was just?—I think it tries to be just.

169. Do you know any case of your own knowledge that has been brought before the Court in which it has acted unjustly?—Yes, I do.

170. Was it because the evidence had not been placed before it, or what was the reason?—It may have been that. I only remember one or two cases where it has been grievously, to my mind, at fault, and I think that was because the Court had taken up a standard on the matter, instead of listening to the evidence and being guided thereby.

171. Do you think that you are able to get at the true state of a trade, probably in Canterbury, better than the Court could which would be sitting there and calling evidence on both sides?—No, I do not.

172. And yet you want us to lay down a hard-and-fast rule dealing with matters that you do not understand, and that you admit the Court would be able to deal with?—As a matter of principle, I think that in certain cases that should be done. I take it that Parliament is even a higher Court, and if it considers that certain things should be done I consider Parliament should rule. I think the Court of Parliament is a great deal higher than what a Judge is.

173. Do you think Parliament knows as much about these matters as Parliament's experts who are set up to deal with them?—It would not be necessary for them to do that. For instance, Parliament limits the hours that children shall work, and limits the age at which they shall be employed in a factory. There they must be a certain age. If allowed to go on indiscriminately, the Judge of the Court would not make any complaint about that. He would deal out justice, but the Parliament says, on principle, until a certain age you shall not employ.

174. Take the freezing companies in Canterbury. You say you do not approve of overtime: how are these freezing companies going to deal with products that come into them very quickly in certain portions of the year, and, in fact, in any other parts of the year?—I can see the difficulty. The employés of the freezing companies have pointed out on different occasions the difficulty.

175. Then you think there should be an exception made in regard to freezing companies?—If the employés think so.

176. Not the employés only, but the employés and the employer together: both have an interest, have they not?—I referred you to, say, the trade.

177. Take the other industry, the dairying industry: do you not think a little exception might be made for them?—I have not sufficient knowledge of the dairying industry, except what I have gained through the papers, and that is not always relied upon to give an opinion. I notice at a conference at Palmerston the other day one of the speakers said that the overtime in the dairying industry should be limited considerably, and that it was made unfair use of. The hours they were working were ridiculous.

178. You do not know anything about this personally?—No, not personally.

179. *Mr. Laurensen.*] I suppose, Mr. Naughton, your inquiries hitherto have been mainly connected with factories connected with trades?—Yes.

180. Really, after all, in voicing your own opinion on, say, the large factories in Canterbury, the persons objecting are those in the town factories, where the work is more of a casual nature?—That is so.

181. In reference to that question of overtime, and also the trades that Mr. Hardy has drawn attention to, such as freezing companies, dairies, and tanneries, it would be a serious matter if this Act was put into force and made to apply to them. You do not venture an opinion, do you?—Speaking generally of factories which exist in the town, and where we are all cognisant of what goes on, I should think I am well able to give an opinion. Of course, we know nothing of the dairying industry, that Mr. Hardy has been questioning me upon.

182. Nor yet about the freezing companies?—Yes; there are freezing companies in close proximity to this town.

183. Are you aware that the freezing companies in close proximity to Wellington have represented to us that it would be a mistake to put this Act into force in connection with their establishments?—I am not aware of that this session. In previous sessions both employés and employers have represented that it would be a grievous harm to them. It seems to be a matter of arrangement; but under the existing conditions it seems, undoubtedly, it would be so.

184. You represent the Wellington unions: are you aware that the Christchurch unions want subsections (a), (b), and (c) in clause 19 made only to apply to young persons and females?—No.

185. Then, in reference to that clause where payment is made for a half-holiday that Mr. Hutcheson drew your attention to: you say, to a very large extent, you are in favour of that?—Yes.

186. We want to hear evidence in favour of this clause, just as well as evidence against it. We want to hear any argument you have to put for or against it. It compels a man to pay for twenty-six full days in the year, *plus* six days' holidays, which makes thirty-two days he would have to pay his men, equalling £16 for no equivalent. Are you aware that a man who was up here before the Committee the other day represented one of the largest Christchurch unions there is and said that that union strongly objected to any such clause being inserted in this Bill?—No; but I am aware there is a considerable amount of difference of opinion in regard to whether the employer, in addition to giving the half-holiday a week, should be asked to pay for the holidays mentioned in the Bill. Some of our men maintain that if we ask for a holiday and do no work for that day, we should not be paid. I think there is another way of looking at it. It is necessary for a man to have so-much to live on, and the industry he is working in should be able to allow a margin to pay for these holidays in a year.

187. There are some industries which are brought into competition with our Home competitors,

and if they had to pay for these thirty-two days they would simply have to close up altogether?—Yes, that may be so in some industries where they are sailing close to the wind.

188. You say the Government pay a man when he is sick: do you know where that obtains?—Yes.

189. I know of a Government department which employs seven thousand men. A man employed in that department for twenty-six years got his hand jammed between two trucks. He went to the doctor and had his hand bandaged, and then resumed his work two hours after the accident occurred, and the two hours were docked from his pay?—I consider that is a shame.

197. I know, in connection with the clerical departments, and also in private establishments, the principle is to pay the men when they are off duty sick. As a rule, with the rank and file that rule does not obtain?—That is so.

191. *Mr. Tanner.*] If this Bill were passed in its present form would there be any necessity for an Eight Hours Bill?—Well, there would be a necessity for it for those not employed in factories.

192. Does your Council regard this as a substitution for the Eight Hours Bill?—No; we have not considered it in that light at all. It is an endeavour, certainly, to make an eight-hours day through the medium of the Factories Bill.

193. If this Bill were passed further legislation would be necessary to establish the eight-hours principle?—Yes.

194. Is that the direction your Council is going in?—We are asking in this Bill for an eight-hours day.

195. So far as it applies to workers here?—Yes.

196. You have admitted in answer to questions that you would be prepared to meet the cases where it is imperative to have some lengthy term of overtime, or where some longer term of day-work should be established?—Yes.

197. Would you be liberal in making that class of exemptions, or would you incline to the rigid state?—I would certainly not make the exemptions except in any case where it is found to be an absolute necessity, and shown by the employer that that was the case to the Inspector.

198. Does that mean that you would give discretionary power to the Inspector to extend the operations of this Bill, when passed, in any particular trade?—I do not see that it could be very well avoided if we started to make exceptions at all, because a man engaged in an industry might claim that there was an urgent necessity for him to work, and it might not be correct. He would have to satisfy some individual. He could not be controlled otherwise.

199. Are you aware that if exemptions were once commenced they would soon begin to widen?—I am of opinion that exemptions have a tendency to widen.

200. Has that been the case in the case of the shops and shop-assistants, and the half-holiday?—I think it has in that case. Of course, people have asked for exemption when they have settled down, when they have adjusted themselves.

201. You spoke of overtime, *Mr. Cooper*: have you ever known of overtime being abused?—Yes, I consider I have.

202. Have you ever met with the practice of employers enlisting the services of casual men who have not worked overtime, when they have exhausted the overtime powers of their own men?—No, I was not aware that the Act applied to men.

203. I am speaking of practices, not of an Act?—I fail to see how the Bill could be abused when on the statute-book.

204. You say you have been fifteen years in the present trade?—Eleven years, sir.

205. That would date back to a time when there was no Factories Act on the statute-book?—Yes.

206. Have you ever known another state of things, and that is in which men regularly employed have been more employed outside the working-hours than inside the working-hours?—Yes.

207. Have you ever known finishers in boot-factories working all night and having no work the next day?—Yes.

208. Has that been a single isolated occurrence or has it been generally fairly established in their factories?—Yes, it was practised in Christchurch.

209. Have you known cases of men going to work to the morning and getting absolutely no work in the day at all?—Yes.

210. Have they been told to get their provisions for the night—when working—and not give over work until 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning, and then go home; and has that been a practice frequently followed in Christchurch?—Yes.

211. And you call that an abuse of overtime?—Yes.

212. Have you ever known any case of employers keeping their own men working overtime to the maximum limit possible while there were capable trades-union men in the same trade walking the streets?—Yes.

213. Have you known that practice to be kept up with a deliberate intention of driving the men out of the town, and that it has had that result?—Yes.

214. In what trade?—In the boot trade.

*Mr. McLaren*: I want to point out, *Mr. Chairman*, that in the case of exceptions in reference to the overtime question our Council wishes it to be understood that we do not want exemptions made to apply to particular industries. If you commence to exempt industries you will overload the Act and kill it outright. Therefore we think the exemptions should apply to conditions, and yet our fear is that some of these seasonable conditions are due to the fact that the employers do not make sufficient provision in regard to scope in their establishments for the workmen; another way in which they do not make proper provision is in respect to the custom of the trade—which they uphold—in the way of receiving orders. This makes occasional rushes of business. They

(the employers) give certain credit to customers, and the customers make the practice of having such rushes of trade by holding back their orders. So the mind of our Council is that the exemptions should be made to apply to the conditions of the trade and not to the industries. With regard to the half-holiday, we do not ask payment for the men for work they do not do; we simply ask for payment for what they do. At the same time we think the hours should be limited to forty-four per week. Regarding the question as to whether Government employes should come under the labour laws, the opinion expressed by Mr. Naughton is his own personal opinion, of course. My own opinion on that point is exactly opposite.

215. *Mr. Hardy.*] Instead of the Eight Hours Bill would not the Trades and Labour Council approve of a seven-and-a-half hours Bill, so that the people of the country would know it is a seven-and-a-half hours Bill?—If the increased productive power with the improved machinery necessitates provisions for distribution of profits, I should say we should go not simply for a seven-and-a-half hours but for a six-hours Bill. I fail to see why the increased profits should go to the employers as a whole.

Mr. H. A. HURRELL examined. (No. 37.)

216. *The Chairman.*] Do you represent the coachbuilding trade, Mr. Hurrell?—Yes.

217. Kindly let us know, then, how this Factories Act will affect your trade?—We think that it will affect our trade very disastrously in almost every way. The Act seems to be loaded down with grievous conditions—such as keeping a correct record of every employé in your establishment, the work that he does, the ages, &c.—and it seems to me in a trade that does such a variety of work as coachbuilders do, in any shape or form, or of any dimensions, it would require quite a staff of clerks to keep the record. The work in my own department is changing almost every hour of the day. And, then, we look upon this as a very serious addition to the cost of running the factory. We also object to the hours. In our trade the men are employed their full time. They lose no time through the condition of the weather. In addition to that, in the winter-time, when work is slack, they are kept on at full time making stock, which has to be held and interest paid on it until it is sold; and for that and many other reasons we think that in our particular business the hours of work should be forty-eight per week. The employment of females and young persons does not affect us very much. With regard to the overtime rates, we have not much to say about them, as we are really working under an award that practically covers these rates of wages.

218. *The Chairman.*] You claim that you would not be affected by the overtime clause in this Bill?—It is time and a quarter for the first two hours, and time and a half afterwards. Well, we are working under those conditions at the present time. The payment for holidays is a thing we very strongly object to.

219. You have heard that the workers themselves do not want that?—But, it is contemplated by this Act, sir.

220. That is quite true?—It is only fair I should say that this is the matter that has engaged the attention of the Employers' Association, and is regarded as probably the most objectionable of all the clauses in the Bill. In our line I believe it will make a tremendous difference in the percentage of cost of running a factory. That I believe is, so far as I know the mind of the masters, really the most objectionable of all the clauses. We look upon the Act as a whole as a most grievous imposition upon the trade that we represent. Before leaving the question of overtime, Mr. Chairman, I understand it has been asked this morning, Why do not masters extend their facilities in their businesses? I would like to point out to the Committee that it is contemplated Acts of this kind that destroy the spirit of enterprise in masters altogether, and will probably have a tendency to decrease rather than extend the factories and finance that will enable the masters to cope with a rush of work when it comes along. I think the result of appeals of this kind is to defeat their own ends to a certain extent. The ground that I intended to speak upon has been very much covered by evidence that has been given, and by that which has been drawn out by different members of the Committee. I therefore shall not occupy your time further, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. R. BLACK examined. (No. 38.)

221. *The Chairman.*] Do you indorse what has been said by Mr. Hurrell, Mr. Black?—Yes; everything he has said I can agree to. The payment for the holidays in our factory alone means £112 a year to us, and what do we get in return for it? And not only that, but we have not only to compete one against the other, but against the men, and for this reason: they take work in some cases from people in the town and do it on Saturday afternoons, Sundays, and in the evenings. Such as painting-work and things like that are done in the cabmen's back yards, and we have a lot to compete with; and if we have to pay for holidays we will have to "sack" either three or four of our men.

222. *Mr. Arnold.*] I think, Mr. Hurrell, your trade is working under an award of the Arbitration Court, is it not?—Yes.

223. And you are fairly satisfied with the award that has been made—it is working satisfactorily?—I think so, on the whole.

224. In your opinion, is that a better mode of fixing the various differences in connection with your trade?—Yes, it is far better. The only objection we have is that we should like to see the award made general throughout the colony, instead of the districts. In our trade it only covers Wellington and the Lower Hutt.

225. Since then the awards down South have been made similar to yours: there was one in Dunedin a week ago?—That will be the first award, I think, after the one in Wellington.

226. There is a tendency, as far as the Court is concerned, to make the awards general?—What we complain most about our own one is that we are bound by the award of the Arbitration Court at Wellington, and yet a man at the Upper Hutt can run a factory on any lines he likes.

227. Do you not consider, in trades such as yours, that the Arbitration and Conciliation Act is quite sufficient?—

Mr. JAMES GREIG examined. (No. 39.)

228. *The Chairman.*] Are you deputed by the Federated Council of New Zealand Builders and Contractors' Association, Christchurch, to give evidence on this Bill before the Committee, Mr. Greig?—Yes.

229. Will you kindly give us your views, then, as to how this Act will affect the builders and contractors?—Well, to start with, in clause 2, subsection (1), "factory" means "any building, enclosure, or place in which two or more persons are employed, directly or indirectly, in any handicraft, or in preparing or manufacturing goods for trade or sale, and includes (whatever the number of persons employed therein) every bakehouse (meaning thereby any building or place in which any article of food is baked for sale for human consumption), and also every building, enclosure, or place in which steam or other mechanical power or appliance is used for the purpose of preparing or manufacturing goods for trade or sale, or packing them for transit," &c. If that constitutes a factory I do not see how we could possibly comply with that in the building trade. A builder may perhaps have made an improvised place where he is doing work, or he may be seeing to a room, papering it, or doing some sanitary work, and he must go and register that place as a factory. He must register it and submit his work to the Inspector, and the Inspector must examine it. Hitherto the authorities have never troubled the builders to register their buildings, but under this Bill we are informed that it will be so. Of course, if we are exempt, then there is no need to thresh that point out before the Committee. We want to point out that if this Bill is passed it would be impossible for us to comply with it. Take a building in the course of erection for three years: The Act provides for certain work at certain periods, such as whitewashing. People might object to have their walls, and say, perhaps, those of a cathedral, whitewashed. The building trade could not comply with the Bill, and if it was put into operation we would object to it. If it is not put into operation, then it is all right. In passing on to clause 6, that bears on the same subject; the one clause hangs on the other. In passing on then to clauses 10 and 11—viz., "Except as hereinafter provided, it shall not be lawful for any person to occupy or use as a factory any building, enclosure, or place unless the same is duly registered as a factory under this Act. Every occupier of a factory who commits a breach of this section is liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds for every day during which the factory is unregistered. The application for registration shall be made in writing in the prescribed form to the Inspector, by or on behalf of the occupier or intending occupier, and shall specify the name and situation of the intended factory; the nature of the work to be carried on therein, and of the motive-power (if any) to be used therein; the maximum number of persons to be employed therein; the full names of the occupier or intended occupier thereof; the name or style under which the business of the factory is to be carried on; and such other particulars as are prescribed. In addition to his application, the applicant shall also deliver to the Inspector a sketch-plan of the intended factory, to the Inspector's satisfaction. In any case where a satisfactory plan has been delivered to the Inspector in connection with any previous application for registration of the same factory, it shall be sufficient if, in lieu of delivering a fresh plan, the applicant refers the Inspector to the previous one." They practically apply to us the same as the previous clauses. For instance, the number of persons and the class of work that they were doing. You could not very well keep a record of what a painter or a carpenter or a plumber was doing in the morning where there are a lot of men and subcontractors are employed. A builder would very probably be a contractor, and might have half a dozen subcontractors, and he could not keep a list of all the subcontractors' men and what they are doing on that building and on the buildings in course of erection, perhaps scattered all over the city. I do not think we can possibly comply with that as far as the building trade is concerned. It would be impossible; we could not control other people's men who were not in our employ. Then, take clause, 12—viz., "As soon as practicable after receipt of the application the Inspector shall examine the intended factory in order to satisfy himself that it is suitable for the purpose for which it is to be used, and also that it is in accordance with the plan." The same delay would occur there again. The Inspector would have to come round to inspect the job and pass the place before we did it. Say a fire had taken place and a builder was sent along to patch up the place, the job could not wait for the Inspector's permit in order to allow the builder to repair the floors and put on a roof. That is one reason why we think that it would be impossible for us to comply with that clause of the Act. Clause 13—viz., "If the Inspector is of opinion that the intended factory or the plan thereof is defective in any respect, he shall, by requisition in writing served on the applicant, specify the defects, and inform him that the intended factory will not be registered until the defects are remedied to the Inspector's satisfaction. If the applicant is dissatisfied with the requirements of the Inspector as specified in such requisition, he may appeal to the local authority, whose decision shall be final. With respect to such requisition and appeal, the provisions of section fifty-nine hereof shall, *mutatis mutandis*, apply in like manner as if the applicant were the occupier of a factory and the local authority were the Magistrate. If, having due regard to the local authority's decision on any such appeal, the Inspector is satisfied that the requirements of this Act in respect to the intended factory have been duly complied with, he shall, upon payment of the registration-fee as hereinafter provided, register the factory, and issue to the applicant a certificate of registration." And clause 15—viz., "In any case where, during the currency of the registration, the number of persons employed in the factory is so increased as to require a larger registration-fee, the occupier of the factory shall within seven days thereafter give written notice to the Inspector, and pay the difference in value between the registration-fee already paid and the fee payable on such increased number." The same thing applies in these clauses: "the number of men employed." The builders are different from any one else. They do not generally keep a record of all their men all the year round. This week they may have twenty men, and next week only two. Sometimes the builders have no employés at all. And

then with regard to joiners' shops, and all that sort of thing: A joiner puts up a shed perhaps for a special job, and when the job is finished he pulls it down again, and it would be very hard if the Inspector under the Factories Act came in and made him whitewash his walls, which were of a temporary character. We have in the past registered our shops, but the Inspector has not insisted on the whitewashing and other things provided by the Act. If he had done so it would have been simply impossible for us to comply with the Act as far as the joiners' shops are concerned. In fact, all these clauses 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 17 hang together. If we cannot work under the one we cannot work under the other. I do not think those who framed this Act could have considered that it was possible for builders to comply with it; it would simply mean that it would stop their business altogether. And then with regard to the source of expense to a builder: If a builder had to register every building and every little job he did, when he sent his bill in to the people he was working for they would object to pay for the fees for registration. Clause 15: that simply follows clause 14, and so on up to clause 17; they all hang together with regard to records, and that sort of thing, and it would be simply impossible for the builders to comply with them. They have not done so in the past. With regard to the hours of work in factories: There has been a good deal said on this question. The first part of this clause is simply a puzzle—how to make the forty-four hours provided in the Bill into forty-five. You could not do it. Possibly you could do it in our awards. In that case everything has been provided by, I may say, the Arbitration Court to guide our trade. The sanitary conditions and all the time allowed for meals, and every stiff point, has been threshed out and provided for by the awards under which the various builders' associations are working now, and I may say we have had no complaints. This clause, as far as the building trade is concerned, is unnecessary. It says you cannot start at 7 o'clock in the morning, but it does not say that you can start at 7.30. In the winter-time we start at 7.30, and if this Bill was rigidly enforced that would not obtain in our trade. Coming down, then, to overtime: I may say that there is very little overtime-work in the building trades. The employers themselves do not like overtime. There are circumstances cropping up sometimes when it is necessary to work overtime. In the case of an exhibition like that we had in Christchurch recently, where it was absolutely necessary to finish that building by a certain date, it would be a great hardship in a case like that if we were not allowed to complete a job like that up to time. And then with regard to the time for working: The men may have to work to suit tides in different places, and many other contingencies may crop up. We have to work to suit all manner of things, and it would be simply impossible to do that under this Bill. Sometimes it is necessary in business houses to do things at night; for instance, for the painters to paint the places when the employes are away. The Arbitration Court has provided for cases of that kind, and the overtime is all set clearly out, and has been complied with, and the men have been paid for years past. We have no complaints whatever from our workers. As a rule, the employers themselves do not want to work overtime. If it must be done, it should be done; and I think in a country like this every encouragement should be given for fostering the industries of the country and meeting every contingency that may arise, instead of stopping and driving the work away out of the colony, and perhaps sending it elsewhere. Of course, at the present time the Inspector of Factories never bothers us. We work under the award. I do not know whether this will be so when this Bill is passed; but, if so, we will be satisfied. With regard to the question of payment for holidays: This would very seriously hamper the building trade if it came into force. We find it would make a difference of about £700,000 to the buildings now in course of erection. It would be possible for a man under this Act to make a great deal more than thirty-two days as holidays. A great many of our men go round to two or three builders in the month. A man might work with me for, say, five days, go to another man and work for him five days, go to a third man and work for him five days, and yet go to a fourth man and work for him five days, and this man gets paid for all the holidays from each of us. He is not only getting paid for these holidays, but for some in the next month. If paid for the holidays it would mean to him £17 12s. a year, considering he got in the thirty-two days, and he could get in a great many more in our trade. We employ the men by the hour, and pay them by the hour. The provision for payment is 1s. 4d. per hour for joiners under the Act, and I do not think the men themselves expect to get paid for holidays. They have never asked for it before the Court. There is one clause here in this Act—clause 28, subsection (6). It says, "No premium in respect of the employment of any person shall be paid to or be received by the occupier, whether such premium is paid by the person employed or by some other person; and if the occupier commits any breach of the provisions of this subsection he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding ten pounds." Of course, that is provided for in another Act, I believe; but I might say that the feeling in the building trade is that it (the trade) does not take boys, and a great many builders object to take them. We have been offered good premiums to take boys before even this legislation came in, and now that the Arbitration Court has legislated for them the builders find they cannot afford to take boys and pay men 10s. 8d. a day to teach them their trade. If there were provision made for the builders to take a premium they might take a boy. Some of our large employers in Christchurch have not got a boy, and would not take a boy at any price. That evidence was given in Christchurch before Judge Edwards. I think that is very hard in a young country like this, and presses hard on the boys in the colony. It is one thing Parliament should see to, and stop, and remedy it. Then, with regard to clause 32, it says, "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 has also been fixed by the Arbitration Court. I do not think it would be any injustice to the workers if the builders were exempted from that clause; and I may say in almost every case the workers have got all that they asked for from the Arbitration Court, and the employers have loyally followed out these awards, and satisfactorily. I do not think it would affect the workers in our trade one bit if we were left out of this Act. Clause 35—viz., "If, in consequence of any such default as aforesaid, an accident occurs, causing death or bodily injury to any person, then, in addition to the occupier's liability under the last preceding section, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds, the whole or any part of which may, in such manner as the Minister directs, be applied for the benefit of the person injured, or of his family or dependants if he has been killed. The penalty imposed by this section shall be deemed to be in lieu of any penalty imposed by 'The Inspection of Machinery Act, 1882,' in respect of the corresponding default under that Act. The occupier shall not be liable under this section if proceedings under the last preceding section to recover the penalty thereby imposed in respect of the default have been taken and dismissed on the merits within one month before the accident occurred. Nothing in this section shall operate to in any way relieve the occupier from any liability which, independently of this Act, he may incur for damage or compensation in respect of the accident or its consequences." This has been provided for in the Workers' Compensation for Accidents and Employers' Liability Acts. The workers have not asked for this extra £100 from our people, and I think this is already provided for in the various Acts that have been passed. Clause 37—viz., "For the better prevention of fires, and of accidents resulting from fires, the following rules shall be observed in every factory in which work is carried on by more than three persons upon a floor situate above the ground-floor: Efficient fire-escapes shall be provided for every workroom situate on any such first-mentioned floor. The plan and system of fire-escape may be prescribed by regulations, and, in so far as no such regulation is made, the Inspector, if not satisfied with the system or plan adopted, may, by requisition to the occupier, direct another specified plan or system to be provided. Every door, whether internal or external, shall be hung so as to open outwards. At all times while persons are actually working in a room every door of the room, or of any passage or staircase leading to the room or serving as means of entrance or exit for the room, shall be kept clear and unfastened, so as to admit of quick and easy egress. The provisions of the two last preceding subsections shall apply also to the outer or entrance door by which the persons employed in the factory usually enter or leave, whether such door belongs to the factory or not. Staircases and steps leading from one floor to another or to the ground shall be provided with substantial handrails, and shall also, if the Inspector by requisition to the occupier so directs, be provided with slats or some other sufficient appliance to prevent slipping. If the Inspector considers any stairway or passage to be so steep, narrow, winding, intricate, insecure, or otherwise defective as to be unsafe he may, by requisition to the occupier, direct the defect to be remedied." Of course, that would hang on the other clauses. We could not put up fire-appliances in a building in the course of erection. It is very very seldom buildings are burned down in the day-time while they are in the course of erection. I think it would be quite sufficient in asking the Labour Bills Committee to treat us in the same way as they have done the shearers in clause 66—viz., "This Act shall not apply to shearers or shearing-sheds, or in any way affect 'The Shearers' Accommodation Act, 1898.'" I think, gentlemen, I have shown you that it would be almost impossible for the builders to comply with the Act if it were passed and strictly sought to be enforced in the building trade.

230. *The Chairman.*] I presume the other gentlemen who are present on behalf of the Builders' Association will support what you have said, Mr. Greig?

Mr. T. CARMICHAEL examined. (No. 40.)

In reply to the Chairman's question as to whether he would support what Mr. Greig had said with reference to the building trade, Mr. Carmichael said: With reference to the half-holiday and charging for the holidays question, at present we are working under awards of the Arbitration Court. We pay by the hour, and the result is, if the clause dealing with this question were interpreted aright, I do not think the builders would be brought under it. Some of us certainly have factories for which we have to register; but for outside work, where we have got men doing this outside work, they are also paid at the same rate and in the same manner as the men in the factory, and the result is, if you would consider our factories in the same form as other factories, you would find we would have to request that all factories work under one award.

231. *The Chairman.*] Your objection would be met by putting in the defence that yours was not a factory?—We have had men working in a factory as well; and then you would have to separate the class of labour that you would be dealing with—that is, where a man had a factory as well as his buildings. There is another thing in connection with this Act that I think, so far as Wellington is concerned, I might explain. I might explain to the Committee that at the present time we work for five days in the week eight hours and a quarter, and for three hours and a quarter on the Saturday. According to the Bill we are not supposed to work more than forty-four hours; still you allow a meal-hour. This is a thing, I think, that may be amended. It is a matter for which we are principally here. Another thing in connection with that overtime question: supposing we were working on an outside job with bricklayers and plasterers, it is absolutely necessary that we should have one at least in the morning to prepare the materials so that the others can commence work. If you pass this Bill we shall be unable to have a man there to have the material ready for the men to make a start at 8 o'clock. That is absolutely necessary, and I trust the Committee will recollect this: that if you limit us in connection with this business we will practically have to knock off the bricklayers and plasterers to seven hours and a half a day.

232. *Mr. Tanner.*] You protest, Mr. Greig, absolutely against this clause in regard to the



£100 penalty: are you aware that this is in the Factories Act at present?—We were never asked to register under the Factories Act.

233. Then, your objection is not to the penalty, but to being brought under the operation of the Act?—I think there are sufficient penalties provided for in the existing Acts. They can come at you under common law and under the Workers' Compensation for Accidents and Employers' Liability Acts.

234. But an employer is also liable under "The Inspection of Machinery Act, 1882," and this Bill is a substitution for it?—We would not object to that clause where there was any machinery, because we have not very much machinery employed in our work.

235. You have never been brought face to face with it?—No; but we were of opinion that the existing Acts had provided sufficiently.

236. There is an impression prevails that it is entirely new, whereas it has been the practice for several years past?—Our buildings have never been registered as a factory.

237. *Mr. Bollard.*] I understand you to say, Mr. Greig, that as a rule of the trade you employ very few boys?—That is, speaking for the carpenters; we employ very few boys.

238. Are there boys employed at bricklaying?—Very few boys learn their trade as bricklayers in Christchurch.

239. Do I understand that the number of boys employed in the building trades is altogether inadequate to keep up the supply of skilled tradesmen to carry on the work in the colony?—Yes; at the last meeting of the Arbitration Court in Christchurch in our dispute the men there asked that there should be one boy to three men. Well, had the builders worked up to that in Christchurch at that time they would have been able to employ eighty more boys in the trade. They were eighty short of the number required by the union, and Judge Edwards said it seemed to him that the builders ought rather to be encouraged to take boys, and he left us a free hand to take as many boys as we liked in Christchurch. You have to bind them and pay them certain wages, but I think very few of the builders have taken any boys on since.

240. Why do they not take them on?—Because you have to pay them too much wages. You have to pay them 5s., 10s., 15s., £1, and £1 5s. a week, and bind them for five years. It does not pay to pay a boy those wages. It is the time lost in paying men 10s. 8d. a day to teach the boys their trade. Some of our employers there employ sixty journeymen, and they have not a single boy in their employ.

241. By-and-by you will have to import them in order to keep up the supply?—Yes; they are coming in from Home and Australia now. Within the last few weeks I have had a man from Scotland.

242. The reason that you do not employ them is that the rates they pay the boys are too high?—That is so. Then, the Judge increased the wages of the men after that.

243. *Mr. Hutcheson.*] I suppose the most of the carpenters in the colony are working under an industrial agreement or award with the employers?—I think so. All the centres have awards.

244. What is the number of hours that the Christchurch carpenters are working at present?—Eight hours a day, and four hours on Saturday. I believe some of them vary a little in other parts of the colony.

245. Would you prefer to settle all the conditions as to hours of labour, overtime, rate of wages, and other conditions of work through the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act?—Well, of course, you can alter that Act. You can approach the Court and get the conditions altered. If it was laid down by statute, of course it takes a lot of trouble to move it and get it altered. The Arbitration Court has been working, and I do not think I should take it out of their hands.

246. Apart from any defects in the Act as between the two Acts, do you consider the machinery of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Court is thoroughly complete and able to deal with all the conditions of labour without any other restrictions in any other Act?—It has done so in our trade; it has met everything so far.

247. There are none of your employés that come under such conditions as contained in the Factories Act that might deem this Act to be more applicable to them than the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act?—No, I do not think so—very few of them, at any rate. If any builder had a large factory with machinery in it, that might apply to him.

248. What you ask the Committee to do, then, is to exempt the builders and contractors from the operations of the Factories Act, except where they have permanent factories, such as Mr. Carmichael spoke of; and you ask this on the grounds that the Conciliation and Arbitration Act fulfils all the necessary conditions that require attention in your trade?—Yes; we want to be left as we are working now.

249. *The Chairman.*] You said that you object to the clause that provides that no premium shall be taken?—We only wanted to point out to the Committee that it was a means of preventing the youth of the colony from learning the trade of carpenters and joiners. Under the present conditions we do not take the boys. It is almost a daily occurrence for people to come and ask us to take their boys.

250. Have you any idea why that clause is put in the Act—why no premium should be charged?—I do not know why it is necessary. There is an Act dealing with that.

251. There is an Act providing for the payment of wages to boys and girls?—Yes.

252. Are you aware that that Act was no sooner passed than there were employers who said that they evaded it, and intended to evade it: deductions were made from the wages?—Our Council want to point out that it is an injustice to the boys of the colony in not allowing them to learn the building trade. At the present time the builders cannot afford to take boys. If they do take them they simply take them for doing fittings, and the boys do not get the same opportunity of learning the trade as they otherwise would.

253. *Mr. Laurensen.*] Then, you have no other suggestion to make to the Committee, Mr. Greig, by which we could introduce some clause that would enable the boys to learn the trade of carpenters and joiners, unless we abolish the prohibition of a premium?—No, not unless you allow the builders and contractors to take a premium. Then it might pay them. As the law exists at present there are not many boys that will learn our trade.

254. Do you not think a boy on weekly pay would pay you?—It is a dead loss at the start. Perhaps a man loses two hours a day in teaching the boy at the start. I may say that a great many of the lads now get with country builders, and put in a certain time with them—and they can take as many boys as they like. These country builders teach these boys to a certain standard. Then these boys come into the town, and a builder is not allowed to take them. He must have a permit to do so. Then the unions rate them up to the very highest earning-power if they come to a contractor and ask to be allowed to serve at a low rate for a year or two. Therefore if they come to you you must keep them at the rough work to get your own money out of them.

255. Do not you think that the technical instruction that is now being gained by boys in the technical classes will enable the boys to learn the trade better?—I would not express an opinion about that. I would not send any of my boys to a technical school to learn a trade.

256. *Mr. Hardy.*] You would not object to any boys that you had going to the Canterbury School of Engineers, would you?—I do not know anything at all about that, but I do know a little about the School of Art there.

The Committee adjourned until Friday morning, the 30th August, 1901.

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## APPENDIX.

ABSTRACTS OF COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED, AND EVIDENCE TENDERED IN WRITING TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE LABOUR BILLS COMMITTEE, ON THE SUBJECT OF THE FACTORIES BILL.

TELEGRAM FROM THE WOOLLEN-WORKERS UNION, KAIAPOI.

Forty-five hour clause in accord with the feelings Kaiapoi Woollen employes.  
1st August, 1901.

TELEGRAM FROM WEST COAST TIMBER COMPANY.

Factories Act, 1901. If this Act is to apply to our timber industries on the Coast, absolutely unworkable. Clause 32 would entail an additional 10-per-cent. expenditure for labour not performed. The whole tone of the Bill is antagonistic to our industries here, and we are unaware of any necessity for its introduction. We request you to oppose it by every means in your power. If you deem advisable, will send delegates to give evidence. The protest is strongly supported by all employers. Please wire reply.

2nd August, 1901.

LETTER FROM CANTERBURY CARPENTERS AND JOINERS' ASSOCIATION.

Association having had the Factories Act and amendments under discussion, unanimously resolved that we are of opinion that forty-four hours should constitute a week's work in all factories.

6th July, 1901.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER FROM THE NATIONAL DAIRY ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND.

The dairying season commences in September and continues until May, after which period many factories either close for the winter or only have to work a sufficient number of hours per day to deal with the smaller quantity of milk then offering. During the season, however, the work of the factory-hands commences between 6 and 7 a.m., and the work must of necessity continue until the day's supply of milk has been treated in the various stages of manufacture, and the completed article packed for storage. The various stages of manufacture have to be attended to at the proper times, or the product suffers injury, and any arbitrary arrangement limiting the working-hours of employes would result in damage to the product and serious loss to the farmers who supply the milk, or would necessitate a double or treble staff being maintained during the season. This latter arrangement would result in equally certain deterioration in quality as former, and would besides double or treble the cost of manufacture, the result in either case being that the dairy farmer would have to abandon dairying. There can be no fixed limitation of labour in dealing with the manufacture of so delicate and perishable an article as butter, and cheese in a lesser degree.

9th August, 1901.

LETTER FROM THE MANUFACTURERS OF AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY.

The manufacture of agricultural machinery in the colony is not holding its own against foreign importation. (See figures marked "A.")

Proposed Factories Bill would enhance cost of manufacture. Manufacturers would naturally advance their prices where it was possible to do so. Farmers would have to pay more for their implements. This would react against local manufacturers and in favour of importers. Every advance in cost and in selling-price would bear fruit in increased importation and reduced local production. Reduced production would add still further to cost, and so hasten the ruin of the local trade.

*Factories Bill, 1901.*

Section 18 should apply, as in 1894 Act, to women and young persons only. Adult males do not require such protection or restriction of liberty as provided in this and succeeding section. Week's work fixed at forty-eight hours by Arbitration Court (Mr. Justice Edwards). Reducing hours to forty-four would diminish earning capacity of plant by over 8 per cent.—a serious deficiency to make up.

Section 19: Agricultural work is seasonal. Impossible to foresee requirements. Hence, usually a rush at certain seasons, and overtime is necessary. Cannot increase hands to overtake work, because—(1) It would require additional plant and buildings, which would be idle during slack seasons, and would constitute an additional burden in the shape of fixed capital; (2) extra hands cannot be got. Agricultural shops could not carry on under this restriction. Adult males should be allowed to decide for themselves *re* overtime. Rate prohibitive. Goods produced in overtime command no higher price. Could not manufacture goods at rate provided in Bill. Must refuse work. Thus factory would be working short-handed in slack season and refusing work in busy times. Not only would total output be reduced, and cost correspondingly enhanced, but farmers would be positively driven into the arms of importers.

Section 30: Six statutory holidays and fifty-two half-holidays = thirty-two days per year = over 10 per cent. on wages. The average profit on wages in agricultural shops will not exceed 10 per cent. Hence this concession alone would absorb all present profit on labour. This section should apply only to women and young persons who are paid a weekly wage, in determining which payment for holidays can be taken into account. For an adult male who works by the hour or by the piece, who is paid for every hour he works or every piece he makes, to be paid for time he does not work or piece he does not make, for service he does not render, is opposed to every principle of justice and common honesty. To apply the provisions contained in this Bill to agricultural shops, whose products have to be sold in competition with all the world, would mean that the industry could not possibly be carried on. The shops would have to cease manufacturing most of the lines now turned out, and sink into the position of repair and jobbing shops pure and simple. Probably 75 per cent. of the hands now employed, numbering several hundreds, would lose their employment, and employers would become importers. It may be suggested that import duties should be imposed on implements to protect the industry. But farmers cannot be similarly protected, as they have to sell their products in the markets of the world, and implement-manufacturers would strongly resent any proposal that would make their profits a special tax upon their customers. If their business will not yield an honestly earned profit, they will prefer to adopt other means to earn a living.

Section 6, subsection (5): The right of Inspector to introduce into a factory, for purposes of inquiry "any other person as he thinks fit," is objectionable. The Inspector is commonly appointed for political reasons, and this power is subject to grave abuse. The right of introduction should be restricted to some constituted authority, such as a constable or Stipendiary Magistrate.

Section 18: Section 54 of 1894 Act should be inserted in place of this. Hours should be forty-eight per week, or eight hours and three-quarters per day, or four-and-a-half-hour spells. And this section should apply to women and young persons only.

Section 19: This also should apply only to women and young persons, as in 1894 Act.

Section 21, subsection (1): See 1894 Act. Workrooms of open construction should be allowed to be used as dining-rooms at the discretion of the Inspector. Subsection (3): See 1894 Act. Limit should not be less than six.

Section 28, subsection (3): No reason to change existing custom. Government shops pay only once a month, and many private shops once a fortnight. In many cases, such as sawmillers remote from a bank, it will be very inconvenient to pay weekly. Subsection (6): 1894 Act prohibits premium for women and youths under eighteen. To prohibit premium altogether will close certain industries against apprentices altogether, such as dentistry, jewellery, watchmaking, the higher branches of engineering, &c. Masters will not undertake instruction in higher branches of industry without premium.

Section 30 should apply only to women and young persons, as in 1894 Act. These are usually paid a weekly wage, and holidays are taken into account in fixing wages. Section 18 expressly excludes Saturday afternoon from the weekly work, yet section 30 includes it and declares that it shall be paid for. As well declare Sunday a holiday to be paid for.

Section 32, subsection (2): Figure this out. If a man works for a given employer for twenty days in October, said employer must pay him full wages for 9th November, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, and Easter Monday following. The workman may work for several other employers during the same six months, and collect wages for holidays from each of them. Further, a man may work for one employer for five days at the beginning of any month and will then be entitled to claim payment for the following four Saturday afternoons. He may work five days in each week for fifty-two different employers in a year, and collect payment for each Saturday afternoon four times over. Actual working-time,  $52 \times 5 = 260$  days. Wages,  $260 + (52 \div 2 \times 4) = 364$  days. That is to say, that he could, by working 260 days in the year, collect wages for 364 full days.

	"A."			
	1891.	1895.	1896.	1899.
	£	£	£	£
Agricultural machinery imported from America	19,000	...	50,000	83,918
Agricultural machinery imported (total)	...	45,841	71,095	108,843
Dairy machinery imported	...	...	7,875	18,052
Steam-engines imported	...	...	4,000	7,500
Total machinery imported	...	...	251,000	405,000
Agricultural machinery locally manufactured (as per Census returns)	144,000	...	102,000	Probably less than 1896.

## RESOLUTIONS OF THE CANTERBURY EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION ON THE FACTORIES BILL.

At a meeting of the Bills Committee of the Canterbury Employers' Association the following resolutions were adopted:—

Hours of Work (clause 18).—In respect to this the committee desires to point out that the Court of Arbitration has, after very exhaustive and careful investigation, determined that the condition of the various industries, more particularly competitive industries, could not be maintained successfully working fewer hours than forty-eight per week.

Overtime (clause 19, e).—The proposals embodied in this clause are considered by the committee quite impracticable, and do not provide for the exigencies of trade. Experience has proved that it is impossible to avoid overtime in certain trades and at certain seasons, and the penalties provided by awards of the Court are already sufficient to discourage the practice.

Holidays (clause 30).—Payment of wages to a worker when he is producing nothing must constitute such a serious tax upon competitive manufacturing industries as they are unable to bear. Payment for the holidays and the half-holidays would be equivalent to five weeks and thirty-six hours per year, or over 11 per cent. surcharge on labour cost.

Clause 32, subsection (2).—If this subsection were read literally it would mean that a man who is discharged from employment after five days' service would be entitled to claim payment for the four next succeeding Saturday half-holidays, and for the whole of the statutory holidays during the succeeding six months, and after twenty days' service would be able to claim payment for all the statutory holidays during the next six months, making it possible for one man to obtain twenty days' payment for four days' holidays.

As regards the penalties provided in clause 35, these are, in the opinion of the committee, already sufficiently covered by the Workers' Compensation and other Acts. This clause is therefore unnecessary.

## LETTER FROM THE WEST COAST TIMBER TRADING COMPANY.

ASSUMING bush sawmills come within the scope of the proposed Act, and reading the interpretation clauses, the Act will apply.

Clause 28, subsection (3): The custom here is for mills to pay monthly. This is preferred by the workmen, and the introduction of weekly pays would not be viewed by them with favour.

Clause 28, subsection (4): Penalty too arbitrary; not required. Workmen thoroughly protected under the Workmen's Lien Act.

Clause 32, subsection (1): It is unreasonable to expect sawmillers to pay wages for thirty-two holidays per year in return for no labour performed. At the present high rates ruling here of 10s. to 12s. per day, this would be a minimum of £16 per man per annum. Our mills, averaging about fifteen men, would thus equal £240 per year paid per mill for nothing. Further, the holidays provided cannot be complied with, owing to the exigencies of the weather and shipping making it impossible to regulate the working-time at the mills, while the shortage of rolling-stock frequently necessitates working at mills at all times to prevent delays to shipping and loss to our clients. Subsection (2): Ridiculous! A man may be employed by seven employers for twenty days during the six months previous to, say, King's Birthday, and could claim a day's holiday pay from each.

Clause 35: This clause appears unnecessary. Surely sufficient protection is already provided for workmen under Employers' Liability and Workmen's Compensation Acts and common law.

We notice no provision has been made whereby the employer can recover from his employé for damage caused by the latter's gross negligence.

My company is of opinion that bush sawmills should be exempt from the operations of this Act.

9th August, 1901.

## FROM THE WEST COAST TRADING COMPANY (LIMITED).

RIGHT HON. SIR,—

*Re* "Factories Act, 1901": I am directed to thank you for your prompt reply to my company's telegram protesting against this measure. I am further instructed to direct your attention to the following clauses, which would operate detrimentally to the best interests of the timber industry in this district. Assuming our bush sawmills come within the scope of the proposed Act, and reading the interpretation clauses, we are inclined to the opinion that the Act will apply. Clause 28, subsection (3): The custom here is for mills to pay monthly. This is preferred by the workmen, and the introduction of weekly pay would not be viewed by them with favour. Clause 28, subsection (4): Penalty too arbitrary; not required. Workmen thoroughly protected under the Workmen's Lien Act. Clause 32, subsection (1): It is unreasonable to expect sawmillers to pay wages for thirty-two holidays per year in return for no labour performed. At the present high rates ruling here of 10s. to 12s. per day this would be a minimum of £16 per man per annum. Our mills averaging about fifteen men would thus equal £240 per year paid per mill for nothing. Further, the holidays provided cannot be complied with owing to the exigencies of the weather and shipping making it impossible to regulate the working-time at the mills, while the shortage of rolling-stock frequently necessitates working mills at all times to prevent delays to shipping and loss to our clients. Subsection (2): Ridiculous. A man may be employed by seven employers for twenty days during the six months previous to, say, King's Birthday, and could claim a day's holiday pay from each. Clause 35: This clause appears unnecessary. Surely sufficient protection is already provided for workmen under Employers' Liability and Workmen's Compensation Acts and common law. We notice no provision has been made whereby the employer can recover from his employé for damage caused by the latter's gross negligence. My company is of opinion that bush sawmills should be exempt from the operations of this Act. Feeling quite confident that you will give these matters your earnest attention, and thanking you in anticipation,

I remain, &c.,

E. A. WICKES, Secretary, West Coast Timber Trading Company (Limited).

Greymouth, 9th August, 1901.

## EXTRACT FROM LETTER FROM MESSRS. JENKINS AND MACK, BRASSFOUNDERS, PLUMBERS, ETC.

OUR business, which comprises plumbing, coppersmithing, brassfounding, and brassfinishing is of a mixed jobbing, repairing, and manufacturing character, and is subject to great fluctuations in the amount of work in hand at different times, and for this reason unrestricted freedom to work overtime is essential to carrying it on successfully. Hence section 19, restricting overtime to very narrow limits, would operate to either entirely destroy our business in certain directions, or to impose unnecessarily expensive and harassing delays on customers requiring such service.

For instance, in respect to shipping repairs, we have frequently to attend to breakdowns in steam and other pipes after ordinary working-hours, and the exigencies of these cases demand immediate and continuous work on them until repairs are effected. Also in hotel hot-water service a breakdown or renewal of same must of necessity be repaired or installed during the night hours, so as to permit of the kitchen being used for cooking purposes during the day, and it would not be possible to do this work on shifts, for the reason that a working staff large enough to cope with these extraordinary cases would be quite beyond a firm's ordinary requirements and could not be maintained.

As already mentioned, the fluctuations experienced in our business also leave us with many slack periods during which we find employment for our hands on manufacturing goods for stock. This class of work is not immediately reproductive to us, nor does it, even under present labour conditions, pay us—that is to say, we can import what we make at less cost, but it keeps our hands together and we are content to sacrifice something for that.

If, however, section 32 of the Factories Bill, compelling payment for all holidays, becomes law, it is certain that manufacturing will not pay us even to keep our hands together.

We hope that the present fair and equitable relations between employers and employed will be allowed to continue, and for the sake of both parties and in the interests of our New Zealand industries the Factories Bill will not, at least in respect to the sections we have mentioned, be carried into law.

27th August, 1901.

## LETTER FROM THE CANTERBURY TYPOGRAPHICAL ASSOCIATION.

THE board of management of the above union is of opinion that "The Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1901," "The Factories Act, 1901," and the Shops and Offices Act are absolutely necessary for the well-being of the workers and the industries of the colony, and this board trusts that the Minister of Labour, the Labour Bills Committee, and the members of Parliament will fight for the Bills and pass them into law this session, notwithstanding the somewhat adverse criticism levelled against them.

26th August, 1901.

## SUGGESTED ALTERATIONS BY THE WELLINGTON PROVINCIAL INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION.

*Factories Bill.*

CLAUSE 18: Amend subsection (1) (a) by altering "forty-five" to "forty-eight"; amend subsection (1) (b) by altering "eight" to "eight and a half"; amend subsection (1) (c) by altering "four" to "five."

Clauses 19 and 30, and subsection (1) of clause 32, not to apply to male adults.

Clause 32: Strike out subsection (2) altogether. Might come and apply to three or four employers for payment for the same holiday.

Clause 35: Is this in addition to liability under any other Act?

Clause 19, subsection (3): Time and a quarter first two hours, time and a half thereafter.

Clause 19, subsection (4): Overtime-book not required.

Clause 32, subsection (1): Not to apply to male or female adults.

*Eight Hours Bill.*

The Bill as at present constituted is considered unworkable.

*Control of Female Employment.*

Considered that this Bill is quite unnecessary, the clauses being provided for in the Factories Act; clause 6 marked out as being specially objectionable.

## SUGGESTIONS OF THE CANTERBURY INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION.

CLAUSE 6, subsection (5): We think that the principle of introducing other persons than the Inspector into a factory is not conducive to its peaceful working, and therefore suggest, if it is necessary, that "any other person" read "constable, officer of the local authority, or Stipendiary Magistrate."

Clause 18, subsection (a): We suggest that "forty-five hours" read "forty-eight hours," for these reasons: Forty-eight hours is a reasonable working-time. Forty-eight hours is less than is worked in any competing country. At some seasons of the year the work cannot be done in the time. The necessary work cannot be done in the time at same cost. The hands in a factory cannot be increased without outlay for buildings, plant, tools, &c., on which increased expenses must be made; and, further, expense for motive-power will be increased to turn out same quantity of work. Employers cannot thus increase hands to cope with work at busy times without dispensing with a number at slack times. This is not favourable to employes. All these items mean increased work

to consumer, who therefore either buys a less number of articles or does without. It also places our industries on a reduced ability to cope with foreigners. If forty-four hours is made usual for factory-hands, hands working in the country will also demand less hours, which will, when added to increased cost of colonial-made manufactures, seriously handicap the great producing classes. Subsection (b) : We suggest "eight and a half" instead of "eight." Subsection (c) : We suggest "five" instead of "four."

Clause 19, subsection (1), (b) : "Two" days should read "four." Subsection (1), (c) : "Thirty" days should read "sixty." There are reasonable trades in which overtime is unavoidable, else the work cannot be done ; trade will therefore be lost to the country, and the cost of manufacturing will be increased, to the consumers' detriment. Subsection (3) : The rate of increased pay for overtime should, we think, be left to the Arbitration Court to decide for each trade on its merits.

Clause 21, subsection (3) : To provide a dining-room for as few as four hands will be very hard on small employers, and give large concerns still greater advantages.

Clause 28, subsection (3) : Add to clause, "except when all employés agree that wages shall be paid fortnightly."

Clauses 30 and 32 : These clauses mean an additional tax on manufacturers of 12 per cent. added to the cost of labour, which in many industries in New Zealand will prevent a profit being made, and will cripple all. It will mean largely increased importations. It will be very unfair to those employers who have been recently before the Arbitration Court, and on the basis of these holidays not having to be paid for have had awards made extending over a considerable period. It will mean increased work for the Arbitration Court, as employers will have to apply for reduction in wages to enable these holidays to be paid for.

Clause 33 : We would point out that these clauses, if carried out to the letter of the Act, would involve conditions almost impossible to be carried out, or at such addition to capital as few industries can stand. These clauses, if rigidly enforced by any Inspector, would mean the closing for a considerable time of many works : it is too much power to put into any one man's hands, and at least an appeal to the Chief Inspector should be allowed. At the present time, although careful and strict where it is necessary, the Inspectors carry out the present Act in its spirit and not in its strict letter, and all sections of the community are satisfied.

Clauses 34 and 35 : What constitutes default should be made clearer ; if something else than refusal to carry out the instructions of the Inspector, these two clauses are too penal, and place a responsibility on the employer he should not carry.

#### THE FACTORIES BILL AND THE LAUNDRY TRADE.

THE sections of the above Bill which are unreasonable in respect to its effects on the laundry trade, and to which exception must be taken, are : Clause 6, subsection (5) ; clause 17, subsection (1) (b) ; clause 18, subsection (1) ; clause 19, subsections (1), (2), and (3) ; clause 20, subsection (2) ; clause 30, subsection (1) ; clause 35.

Clause 6, subsection (5) : We consider that to allow an Inspector to take with him into any factory he chooses any person he desires, and to compel the employer to produce his books for that stranger to examine, and to allow him to examine those employed in that factory, is to curtail British liberty, and make it possible for our business transactions to become public property. The words "any person" should be either struck out, or the words "Justice of the Peace or constable" substituted.

Clause 17, subsection (1) (b) : This portion of the Bill is quite unworkable in laundries, as it is sometimes necessary for a person to be engaged in different branches of the work within half an hour, and to keep a correct record would mean having a special clerk to note the work of each person.

Clause 18, subsection (1) : This is the principal clause of our objections, for, should this become law, the effect would be to cripple the laundry business, and more especially steam laundries. For no one to commence work until 8 o'clock would mean that the majority could not start until 9 o'clock and would be obliged to cease work at 4.30 o'clock p.m., thus working only six hours and a half per day. This is easily explained : It takes one hour to raise a sufficient pressure of steam for engine purposes and for heating drying-rooms, and one hour to have irons sufficiently heated. If males are included in the Act, it certainly means a 9 o'clock start. Then, again, at the end of a day's work, machines must be seen to, fires drawn or banked, engine wiped down, &c., which cannot be done under half an hour ; and, to have this done at 5 o'clock, we must stop at 4.30 p.m. No provision is made in this Bill for stable-work. No horse can have feed or fresh water, nor be wiped down, nor have its dirty bedding removed, until 8 o'clock ; and should a van arrive at 5 o'clock, which is too late for an overtime permit, what can be done ? The whole of subsection (1) of this clause is unworkable in steam laundries, as we could only work six hours and a half for five days, or thirty-two hours and a half a week. It could not be expected that an employer would raise steam on Saturdays, when it would be impossible to work more than two hours and a half—that is, for the majority of those employed. It would simply mean this, should this portion of the Bill ever become law : that a large portion of the laundry-work now done in New Zealand would be done in Australia or elsewhere. With the increased price that would be necessary for the shipping companies to pay, we feel certain they would have the linen done elsewhere. To the Union and Huddart Parker Companies it would be an easy matter for them to have all their laundry-work done in Australia, while the steamers from England could take their soiled linen back with them to England, as is done with many of the Trans-atlantic liners. This would be driving a tremendous amount of work from New Zealand, as the Union Company alone pay from £4,000 to £5,000 annually for laundry-work. The only suggestions we can make with regard to this clause is that all males over eighteen years be exempt from the Act, and that only females and young males be included, as is at present, and that the law remain as at present with regards intervals for meals, allowing half an hour, or allowing, as we do, forty-five minutes for meals.

Clause 19, subsections (1) (b), (1) (c), (1) (d) : Our objections to this section are : (1.) That permits ought to be obtainable on four nights in one week, as at present, instead of two. It frequently happens that we have only two busy weeks in a year, on the occasion of the arrival of such boats as the "Gothic." It would, therefore, be unreasonable to refuse permits on those weeks. We would prefer that the number of nights in a year on which permits may be granted be reduced rather than the number of nights in a week be restricted to two. (2.) Permits ought to be obtainable on Saturday afternoons. It is on holiday seasons—Christmas and Easter seasons particularly—that the laundries are taxed to their utmost, consequent upon the large amount of travelling done; now, to cope with this extra work, with reduced working-days it is really necessary to work on the Saturday afternoons succeeding a holiday. (3.) The scale of overtime should be ordinary rate, or not less than 6d. per hour. It is unreasonable to have to pay such a high rate as 9d. an hour to girls, seeing that overtime is only worked when absolutely necessary, and that the employer receives no greater remuneration from his customers.

Clause 20, subsection (2) : This could not possibly be applied to laundries, as it is impossible to prevent the escape of steam in a washhouse unless washing was done with cold water, which is ridiculous. Subsection (3) : In the case of a woman applying for work in less than four weeks after confinement, she should be subject to the penalty, as the employer would be unable to tell and is it not unreasonable to ask a woman about such matters as this?

Clause 30, subsection (1) : We do not wish Christmas Day, nor Good Friday, nor the Sovereign's birthday to be altered, but we think the Inspector should have the power of allowing two other holidays to be substituted for New Year's Day and Easter Monday. Considering the number of unforeseen holidays that occur during a year, we think Labour Day should not be included.

Clause 35 : We consider this clause should be struck out, as the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act would fully compensate for any accident that might occur.

Clause 28 should remain a part of the Act, as instances have occurred where a person has been too poor to recover money owing as wages, and for the Inspector to have the power to assist such persons would be a good addition to our statute-book. We also consider that Asiatics should be classed with the females and young boys, as they are engaged largely in connection with the laundry business, and do the work of females.

We think the principle of paying for time not worked is a bad one, as it creates a desire for too many holidays. According to the present form of the Bill, an employer must pay a person for a holiday even should that person leave a few days before the holiday. This is unreasonable.

#### STATEMENT SUBMITTED BY THE KAURI TIMBER COMPANY.

VALUE of running plant, £158,000. Pays in wages per annum, £69,000. Pays in wages weekly—City, £480; country, £900: total, £1,380. Works city mills forty-seven hours; works country mills fifty-two hours.

#### Loss through Factories Bill.

Holidays, six days = one week ... ..	£	1,380
Loss of hours—		
City, three hours per week = three weeks and a half, at £480 ...	1,680	
Country, eight hours per week = nine weeks, at £900 ...	8,100	
Loss on use of plant—		
Plant produces £15,800 per annum. New Bill means loss of		
10 per cent. on that, or...	1,580	
Total loss per annum ... ..	£12,740	

Would mean even greater loss than this, as on account of clearing *débris*, and overtime being paid time and a half, would have to close altogether Saturday, and reduce hours to forty.

#### AUCKLAND SAWMILLERS' ASSOCIATION (includes City Mills alone).

VALUE of running plant, £69,000. Pays in wages per annum, £49,900; pays in wages per week, £998. Works at present, forty-seven hours.

#### Loss through Factories Bill.

Holidays, six days = one week ... ..	£	998
Loss of hours—		
Three hours per week = three weeks and a half, at £998 ...	3,493	
Loss on use of plant, valued at £69,000—		
Produces, say, 10 per cent. = £6,900. Lose 6½ per cent. on that	448	
Total loss per annum ... ..	£4,939	

#### FROM THE COLONIAL SUGAR-REFINING COMPANY (LIMITED), AUCKLAND.

THE proposed reduction of working-hours and payment for idle time as public holidays can only bring about a reduction of the earnings of the men employed.

We have worked up a large business without any aid in the shape of protective duties, and in spite of advantages which the importer has over the local manufacturer, and can retain for New Zealand the trade we have acquired; but only on the condition that there be no interference between ourselves and the men who work for us. These men—in accordance with the uniform



practice of this company—are on the same footing as regards their pay, duties, and hours of work as the staff of the Australian refineries, and their earnings will, we believe, be found to compare favourably with those of the employés in similar trades in this colony; but in consequence of the high cost of coal in Auckland, and the dearer material in the shape of stores, bags, &c., the working-expenses here are higher than in New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria. Any addition, therefore, to such expenses will at once offer a strong inducement to supply part of the demand for New Zealand from our Australian refineries, particularly that in Sydney, where the plant has during the past five years, been largely added to, and without loss from *ad valorem* duties, such as have so greatly swelled the cost of similar additions to our refinery.

Under these circumstances, our employés here have some weeks since been informed that we will not increase the rate of wages we now pay per hour if the new Bill becomes law, and the consequence of the legislative changes above alluded to will thus be a diminution of their pay, while, as the factory is designed for working with two shifts, any reduction of the hours of labour will necessarily bring about a serious falling-off of the output without any corresponding advantage.

Another point to which we would direct your attention is that forbidding the employment of any men on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. It is practically impossible to work a factory like ours full time without effecting engineering repairs and carrying out minor additions and alterations while the works are stopped; and the enforcement of such a rule would necessitate repairs being effected while the machinery was in motion. This would greatly enhance the risk of accident to the men, and involving the idleness of a large number of men at frequent intervals while the engineering staff made good the defects, &c. If any reference to Saturday and Sunday work be permitted to remain in the Bill, it should be made quite clear that this does not apply to any men employed on those days in maintaining, altering, or adding to any plant, machinery, and buildings in connection with the factory.

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