

215. Is that the only thing?—I think it is a hardship that we should have to pay for the four holidays, seeing that we receive no equivalent.

216. None of your hands are employed on piecework?—None.

217. So that the holidays tell against you, because you get no work done for the wages paid for those days?—Just so, and, as we employ about eighty girls, it is a large item.

218. *Mr. Fulton.*] Could not that be considered in the matter of wages?—We have never reduced the wages. Labour is still very scarce in our line in consequence of the factories employing so many hands.

219. *The Chairman.*] There is no other point?—No; otherwise we approve of the Act thoroughly.

220. You think, generally, that young persons should not be employed more than eight hours?—Yes, and should have the half-holiday on Saturday.

221. Do you not see that there would be scarcely any check for such an arrangement as granting permission to work an hour or more extra in cases of urgency?—The Inspector would be the check. If permission was not granted, there would be an end of it.

222. You mean that application should be made?—Yes, to the Inspector or to the Resident Magistrate. I do not mean that it should be an everyday occurrence, but only occasionally, in cases of emergency, in which the girls are always willing to lend a hand. We might not apply at all, but sometimes, if we had the liberty, it would be a great convenience.

223. On any day in the week except Saturday?—I would include Saturday, making it any day in the week.

224. *Mr. Fulton.*] Have you found the inspection sufficient so far as you know of it?—It has not been very frequent, about four times in the twelve months, I think.

225. *The Chairman.*] Do you remember the dimensions of the workroom which the Commissioners visited in your establishment the other day?—The length is 78 ft., breadth 26 ft., and height about 14 ft. There are two ventilators and two fire-places in it.

226. How many young persons are employed in it?—Between seventy and eighty.

227. *Hon Mr. Reynolds.*] Is it not the case that sometimes the forewomen, in order to finish some work in hand, keep the girls later than they ought to do?—Yes; we were fined from that cause. The forewomen kept them, contrary to our instructions. We had notices posted up, and told the forewomen they must keep the proper hours. They make promises to the customers sometimes unknown to us, and cannot get the work done without breaking the rules; and for this we are held responsible.

228. The question is whether these forewomen should not be fined instead of the employers?—Yes; I think it would be a wise thing to do so.

Mr. INSPECTOR MALLARD, re-examined, stated:—

229. As requested, I visited the City Steam Laundry on Saturday afternoon last, at 3 o'clock, and found ten women working there. I ascertained that their hours of working are from 8 in the morning until 7 at night every day, including Saturday, and that they are allowed an hour for dinner. The Saturday makes no difference with regard to hours of working. They, in fact, ignore the Act. I then went to the Otago Steam Laundry, in the North-East Valley, at ten minutes past 4. The proprietors are Messrs Clark and Co. They had no work for their employées to do, or they would have been working, as the employers frankly told me. Their hours are from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., with an hour for dinner between 1 and 2, and tea at 5. There is a very marked difference between the way in which the Otago Steam Laundry and the City Steam Laundry are conducted. In the City Steam Laundry, the one I first visited, the average wages are from 12s. to 24s. per week, day-work. The ages of the employées are from fifteen upwards. In the Otago Steam Laundry all the employées reside on the premises, and the proprietors find them in food just as they would domestic servants. At the same time, their wages are equally as high as in the other establishment. The head woman, or manager, gets 25s., and her food and lodging; the rest average 20s. a week. They are engaged by the year or by the month, just as ordinary domestic servants. There are four employed in the washing-room, and five in the ironing-room.

Mrs. SOPHIA SIMKINS, examined, stated:—

230. I was nine months in the City Steam Laundry, as a shirt dresser, but I washed occasionally, when required. I worked from 8 in the morning till 8 and sometimes 10 and 11 o'clock at night. The number employed varied from five to sixteen, according to the work to be done. We were only allowed ten minutes for lunch and ten minutes for tea. When there was extra work to be done we were obliged to stop till it was finished, and not a penny extra did we get for it. I received 4s. a day; but the wages were cut down to 3s. a day for new hands. I was not cut down to 3s. I did not engage for a certain time. I only ironed shirts. There was no engagement by the month. They just took on hands as they wanted them, and dismissed them when not required at any time. There were no notices posted up, or rules or regulations about hours. There were girls as young as eight—about six of them—marking the clothes, and their hours were as long as ours. They were getting 5s. 6d. a week. I left the Laundry when my husband obtained a situation, as we could not both be away from home. I have seven children—one in England, and six here. I worked as late on Saturday as any other day. If we did not work as long as they required they would stop a proportion off the wages. We were told that if we did not like the place we could leave it, and they would get others.

Mr. WILLIAM CONNELL, Inspector of Nuisances, and General Inspector under the city by-laws, examined.

231. *By the Chairman.*] I was appointed in 1876. Under the Public Health Act the Inspector can determine whether, in his opinion, the necessary waterclosets are provided for the number of persons employed in a factory. If I knew the number of females and males employed in a factory I,