

variety; but, more than that, the constant movement of the legs at a sewing-machine causes congestion of the pelvis, and gives rise to pelvic troubles and uterine and ovarian diseases.

947. Constant standing for long hours causes relaxation of the ligaments of the pelvis and gives rise to similar complaints.

948. Anæmia is very common here. Its frequency is something extraordinary. I believe one out of every three suffers from it every year, and some almost continuously. They get better under treatment in a few months, and then gradually drop again into the same condition. I find it affects two classes in almost equal proportions—domestic servants and factory- or shop-girls. In proportion to their number I think domestic servants are as much affected by anæmia as any other class, and school-teachers largely suffer from the same complaint.

949. I might say something about the causes of sweating. Some believe it is due to the public rushing for cheap bargains. Now, I do not think that has the remotest influence on sweating. In Dunedin here, if I pay a fancy or even an extravagant price for a suit of clothes, I have no guarantee they are not made by sweaters. Indeed, there are very few male tailors employed now. And I may state my experience recently in London. I there came in contact with a great many of the lower class of women in the special hospitals, especially at the Eye Hospital at Moorfields, and I found, to my great surprise, that there are women who could only make 5s. or 6s. a week by working to the detriment of their health; and, on making inquiry as to where they worked, I found that they worked for shopkeepers in the West End and in Regent Street. The very wealthiest firms—the firms that charge a profit, I should say, of 200 per cent.—pay their workers the very lowest rates of wages.

950. The Tailoresses' Union here is a step in the right direction. I have spoken to a great many young women since it was formed, and they all admit that it has increased their wages considerably, and they approve of home work being stopped. They like to earn a decent wage during the day and to have the evenings to themselves. It is very necessary, if they are at work constantly during the day, that they should have the evenings to themselves.

951. I have had barmaids as patients pretty frequently. I fancy they were generally suffering from anæmia. They have all sorts of troubles, but chiefly anæmia, or, rather, it is not so much anæmia as that they are just in a broken-down condition from standing for long hours and breathing an unhealthy atmosphere. I consider their employment is one not suited for women to be engaged in, and I have known many loose women employed in low-class hotels in Dunedin.

952. The tendency of overwork is unquestionably to lead to vice. The health is reduced, and when the constitution is enfeebled the mind is not so able to resist temptation in any form.

953. I am quite satisfied there will be no amelioration of the condition of society until it is acknowledged that female labour in any shape or form for commercial purposes is a misfortune, and society does all in its power to reduce it to a minimum. In fact, societies of males, instead of striking for an increase of wages for themselves and so forth, should direct all their efforts to keeping back women from labour, and agitate that question. The labour-market is glutted, and glutted because men have to compete with their sisters. I mean to say that females were never intended for commercial labour. It is quite capable of proof that they were never intended to labour commercially, because they are then brought into competition with their brothers and fathers.

954. I have seen more misery brought about in Dunedin from imprudent marriages than from any other cause, leading to drink, prostitution, and every other evil. I have noticed this, and watched cases for years. In some cases a young couple will get married. The girl is nice-looking and accustomed to business, but she knows nothing about the economy of a house. This couple will not be long married till they get into debt; then a confinement or disease comes; and they are never out of hot water, but sink lower and lower. I have seen numerous cases of that kind in Dunedin arising simply because the woman was not brought up in a way that would make her a suitable helpmate to a working-man.

CHRISTCHURCH.

Mr. JOHN KENNEDY examined.

955. I am Inspector appointed under the Employment of Females Act within the Resident Magistrate's jurisdiction, Christchurch.

956. I make a half-yearly report. I do not know what becomes of it afterwards. There is nothing in the Act that obliges me to make this report.

957. I think, taking the factories as a whole, that the law is fairly carried out.

958. The Kaiapoi mill is not in my jurisdiction.

959. I think I can give you copies of the half-yearly report. In giving my report I comment upon the various infringements of the Act, and suggest amendments.

960. There are about one hundred and forty employers of labour under the Employment of Females Act in Christchurch.

961. A good deal of boy-labour is employed in Christchurch between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, and some of them are employed very late. I have seen them to 9.30 at night, and they commence at 8 in the morning. I know this happened in a printing establishment.

962. During the three years I have acted as Inspector under the Act I have laid forty informations, and most of them resulted in convictions. They were principally cases of keeping the hands after hours on Saturday afternoon.

963. I take particular notice of the ages of the children.