

66. Have you any right to enter private establishments where work is being done?—Yes, provided they employ labour, and the articles manufactured are for sale. I cannot enter where none but private families are employed.

67. You say there is an establishment of this sort here?—Yes; there were three sisters. I could not interfere with them. They were in partnership. This establishment does not now exist.

68. Is there any provision made for overtime?—None in the Act.

69. Do they get extra pay for overtime?—In very few cases; not as a rule.

70. Should provision be made?—Yes.

71. Who should allow work after regulation hours?—That is the question. It is a very great hardship. I think when there is a rush of work power should be given to the Resident Magistrate, in certain cases, to extend the hours.

72. Take the rush of the Exhibition?—I would be inclined to give power in a case like that, provided the employés were agreeable, and were paid for the overtime.

73. You said it was very great hardship for girls to turn out in bad weather for their meals: do you not think the employers should be made to give proper accommodation for the girls in meal-hours?—It should be provided by the Act. I do not think it would be a very difficult thing to provide proper accommodation. It might be in some cases. There are some factories that have no accommodation of that sort at all.

74. Are there any factories at present existing you would condemn if asked to pass judgment?—Yes.

75. Is that in reference to the ventilation?—Partly on that account, but chiefly that there are too many hands employed in them—they are overcrowded.

76. Is there proper provision made for conveniences?—As a rule there is.

77. Have the sexes separate conveniences?—In some cases they have not. I have no power to interfere. They can simply refuse to provide separate conveniences.

78. Should there not be power?—Certainly.

79. Do you think the eight-hours law suitable?—I am sure it would not do unless there was provision made in cases of emergency for extending the hours.

80. Are there no hours of work defined in the Factory Act?—Yes, there are for women and children; not for men, and boys over fourteen years of age. Generally the men get paid for overtime. I think that the boys also ought to get paid for overtime.

81. Is there any protection provided against accident where machinery is employed?—None whatever.

82. Does the Act include printing establishments?—Yes.

83. Do you have anything to do with barmaids?—No.

84. What about restaurants?—In some restaurants the girls are employed from 8 in the morning till 11 and 12 at night.

85. They do not come within the meaning of the Act?—No.

86. You know that the scope of this Commission includes them?—Yes.

87. The police would be the proper persons to apply to with regard to barmaids?—Yes.

JOHN HANSON, recalled, said:—

With reference to the statement I made yesterday regarding the hours during which boys worked at rope-works, I ought to have said that my statement had reference to a time about two years ago. They are not working that length of time now. I have recently seen girls taking parcels from factories. I did not inquire or examine as to what the parcels contained; I took it for granted that the taking-home of work was still continued. When I said "factories" I referred to dressmaking establishments; and I do not think they come under the Union. Dressmaking establishments are factories under the Act. I did not mean clothing-factories. I am reported to have said that the Factory Act does not apply to boys: what I meant was that their hours were not limited. The Act does apply to them in some respects, but "boys" are not included with women and children in section 5 of the Act. I do not know anything beyond hearsay about the tramway employés. There is no supervision regarding the hours of tram-conductors. The overloading of trams would come under the Corporation by-laws, and it would be for the police to enforce those by-laws. I do not think any person has control over the length of hours the tram-conductors work. There have been prosecutions for overloading cars, and a test-case is to be brought. The drivers of trams are employed by the contractor (McEwen), and the conductors by the company.

SILAS SPRAGG examined.

88. I am a member of the reporting staff of the *Otago Daily Times*, and in that capacity towards the close of 1888 I received instructions to make as thorough an investigation as practicable into what was termed the "sweating system" then in operation, and concerning which communications had been received by and published in the *Times*.

89. The investigations were made in consequence of instructions from the editor, and, of course, at the expense of the *Otago Daily Times* Company, by myself as an employé.

90. I began the inquiry purely as a matter of business, and without any preconceived notions regarding it, and prosecuted it with a view to ascertaining the facts, whatever they might be. With the results of the inquiry I was in no way concerned, my instructions being to investigate the circumstances.

91. I admit that the facts elicited soon removed my feeling of comparative indifference, but I believe that did not affect prejudicially the thoroughness of the inquiry or render it in any degree less impartial.

92. The results of these investigations appeared in a series of articles which were published in the *Times* during the month of January last year.