

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