

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