

find that I cannot run my shop unless I open it after 6 o'clock. I have a wife and five children to support, and it is after 6 o'clock when the trade is done in Newtown, because it is then that the people have an opportunity of purchasing, after they have had their tea. It is a catch trade also; people see a pair of boots which takes their fancy, and they come in and get them. If you did not get the trade then you would lose it altogether. You must get these things on the spur of the moment or your opportunity is gone. I cannot carry on my business unless the hours are extended. There are only myself and my wife, and she relieves me in the shop.

179. You acquiesce generally in what has been stated by the other witnesses?—Yes, it affects me just the same.

GEORGE BAYLIS re-examined. (No. 49.)

180. *The Chairman.*] Do you wish to supplement what you have already said?—The one point I would like to bring out is this: that the effect of closing the shops in Newtown has been this: people who have been in the habit of traversing the streets after their day's labour was done now want to go to the opera or some other place of amusement. It has been the means of sending them to the music-halls and places of that description, and I know that as a matter of fact the foreign companies of play-actors which have been coming here have been carrying away large sums of money.

181. And the people have an amount of recreation at theatre and music-halls now that they never had before?—They have been spending money that goes out of the colony, and which would have provided outfits for their children and the improvement of the district. There are two ways of looking at these things. Five shillings spent in the Opera House would be much better spent in the household on the family.

182. *Mr. Barber.*] The effect through the enforcement of the Act has been the depreciation of the whole district?—Yes.

183. So that if this law extended throughout the colony the colony would not be in such a prosperous condition?—That is so, undoubtedly.

184. (To *Mr. Harvey.*) Your trade, like *Mrs. Forrest's*, and all that class of trade, is done only while the people have leisure in the evening?—That is so.

185. People are engaged in some kind of business or other, and if they wish to pick out a song or a book they only have time to do so in the evening?—Yes.

186. (To *Mr. MacDougall.*) Supposing the Act is enforced, will you carry on your business?—I am going outside of Wellington.

187. Is that chiefly because of the enforcement of the Act?—Yes, I never expected that the Legislature would make other arrangements or I do not think I should have made the arrangements I have made.

188. (To *Mr. Roberts.*) Does the early closing interfere with the artisan in getting tools wanted in your trade?—Yes; he has to come down town, and for the most part he gets his employer to get them for him when he wants a large amount.

189. (To *Mr. Steadman.*) Do you consider the enforcement of the Act is an inconvenience to the people living in your district?—Undoubtedly.

190. And you think that if a petition was sent round, as has been done in Auckland and Christchurch, the people of Newtown would sign the petition to the effect that it was for their convenience that the shops should be kept open after 6 o'clock?—Yes, I can positively say that.

191. It is not only an inconvenience to the shopkeepers at present, but also to the public?—Yes. If a working-man wants a pair of boots made it is impossible for him to come away from his employment to get measured. He has to wait until he has had his tea.

192. That also applies to a ready-made pair of boots: he could not send a little child for them?—Yes, it applies there also.

193. *Mr. Aitken* (To *Mr. MacDougall.*) I think you said you had made arrangements to sell your business?—Yes.

194. Would that not show that there was something to buy?—Since making this arrangement, and further arrangements on my own behalf to get out of Wellington, the purchaser cancelled his agreement and forfeited £40 to get out of it. If some one could be found weak enough to buy, I would sell.

195. *Mr. Fisher.*] Providing the difficulty of fifty-two hours a week were got over, would any of you have any objection, if it were unanimous, to close at 9 o'clock?—

*Mr. Harvey:* I think it is an interference on the part of anybody to say what time we shall close our shops.

FRIDAY, 7TH JULY, 1905.

JONATHAN WILLIAM COLEMAN examined. (No. 50.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—I represent the tobacconists of Auckland.

2. Have you a Tobacconists' Association?—Yes.

3. And Hairdressers' Association?—Yes.

4. Have you any idea how many members there are in the association?—There are only eight, because it was formed for the Arbitration Court. Those who are not affected by the Arbitration Court do not want to join the association for fear of being involved in anything that did not affect them. We represent those who do belong to the association.

5. How many are there altogether?—Seventy.

6. Is that the total in Auckland?—Yes.

7. Do you wish to make any statement?—As tobacconists we ask you to exempt us from the operations of the Act on the ground that fully one-third of our business is done after 6 o'clock, and of