

shopkeepers say that the fact of their not being open of an evening will necessitate the workman's making his purchases at the big places in the city during the daytime, because when he arrives home there is no opportunity for him to shop, and he must get what he wants in the other district?—I do not know whether the wholesale places would sell to him.

361. I do not mean the wholesale places. I am referring to the retail shops in the city?—They have got to close the same as any others.

362. Yes; but the man is in the locality of the big shops in the daytime; he is not in the locality of the small shops during shopping-hours, because his occupation keeps him in town?—Well, that might be so. But I would like to know how many men do the shopping. One would imagine that there were no wives and families at all.

363. Does the wife go out, as a rule, and buy a pair of boots for her husband?—Why not? I should say that in eight cases out of ten the wife does that. At any rate, a man does not want a pair of boots every day in the week.

364. You do not think the enforcement of the Act would divert the trade to the large shops?—No; I think it would have the opposite effect.

365. And you do not think that is the reason why the larger shopkeepers are clamouring for the enforcement of the Act?—No.

366. *Mr. EU* (to *Mr. Hampton*).] Hitherto we have had shopkeepers and shop-assistants giving evidence. I want to put a few questions to you as a customer at shops—one of the public. You lived in Christchurch before you came here, I believe?—Yes.

367. Were the hours usually observed by shopkeepers later there than they are here, or are they much later here?—They are much later here.

368. What do you attribute that to?—Competition.

369. Did you make purchases in Christchurch from the shops there?—Not to any extent. I was a single man then.

370. Did you make your own purchases?—I usually got what I wanted when going home from work after 5—between 5 and 6. I would get all I wanted and be home by half past 5.

371. You are aware that most of the drapers' shops and boot-shops there close at 6?—Yes.

372. And you found no difficulty in making your purchases before 6 o'clock?—That is so.

373. What articles does a man usually purchase?—I was trying to think what I have to buy. The wife does nearly all the shopping. There is clothing and boots, but they are not every-day matters. You do not want the shops open every night for them. I am a smoker, but I always buy my tobacco going home from work.

374. Speaking as a customer of the shops, you say that there would be no difficulty whatever in securing all that you desire to secure before 6 o'clock?—That is so.

375. And by 9 o'clock on Saturday night?—One o'clock on Saturday.

376. I am assuming that there is one late night?—We have had no difficulty at all in doing all our shopping and keeping within the limits laid down by clause 3 of the Act.

377. Your wife makes the usual household purchases?—Yes.

378. Where do you live?—In Newtown.

379. I suppose the usual things go into your home that go into any other working-man's home?—Yes.

380. And your wife secures all these things easily by 6 o'clock?—Yes, but there has been this difference. Since we have been keeping within these limits for shopping, our trade has been localised more; we have had to shop nearer home than we had been doing previously. Very often of a Saturday night previously the wife used to go down to town and do some shopping there, but now it is not worth while, because by the time she gets down town the shops are shut, or else there is a rush before shutting at 9. So she stays in Newtown and does her shopping there. And I know several of my work-mates who are in the same position.

381. Your Council represents a number of unions in the City of Wellington: about what number?—Between two thousand five hundred and three thousand unionists.

382. And the bulk of these, I suppose, are married men?—The larger portion of them are.

383. They, of course, are all customers of shopkeepers?—Yes.

384. And they are unanimous that their requirements can be well served if the shops close at 1 o'clock on Wednesday and 6 o'clock on ordinary nights?—I have never heard any members of the unions at any of their meetings, when this matter has been discussed, raise any objection to the proposal.

385. With regard to the Saturday half-holiday, speaking as one of the public, are you satisfied to have it fixed by a referendum of the people of the colony as a whole, or, say, by those in a small district, as to whether Saturday shall be the uniform half-holiday?—I think we should have it fixed, the same as Saturday is fixed under the Factories Act. At the present time, we have portion of a family working in a factory and a portion in a shop, and if they want to go anywhere on their half-holiday they have to go at different times.

386. Would you be in favour of a referendum being taken on the question whether it should be Saturday or not?—I would rather see the half-holiday fixed on the same day as is fixed under the Factories Act.

387. *The Chairman*.] That is not the question. Would you be in favour of a referendum being taken?—The Council have never considered that aspect of the question at all.

388. *Mr. Alison*.] How many members constitute the executive of the Trades and Labour Council for Wellington?—On the Wellington executive there are ten.

389. *Mr. Fisher* (to *Mr. Collins*).] You said that the Jewish people here work five days a week and compete successfully with others?—Yes.

390. Would you suggest as an innovation that five days a week should be worked generally?—