

7. You have heard it suggested that, instead of legislating so that the clock shall be altered, the people should alter their habits—that the Government should fix an earlier hour for all the public officers to start work and leave off, and that the whole of the community should come into line, without there being any alteration made in standard time: what do you think of that?—I think it is simply impossible. It is too difficult altogether to alter the customs and habits of the people. I think that any partial experiment, such as the Civil Service adopting this proposal and not the rest of the community would be a failure.

8. *Mr. McLaren.*] Has the extension of working-hours beyond 5 p.m. been on the increase or on the decrease?—The extension was continually on the increase until within the last year or so. During the last year business has been so slack in many occupations that there has not been the same pressure for overtime, and it is exceedingly difficult to calculate, because sometimes when people work more overtime at one time of the year, then there is a loss by discharge or half-time at another; there is a minus as well as a plus quantity. Overtime was growing in the Dominion year by year until a year or two ago, and the overtime in most cases had to be paid for extra under some awards, or under the Factories Act, or in some other way; but it grew in spite of that.

9. *Mr. Fraser.*] If we proceed to deceive ourselves by calling 4 o'clock 5—would that stimulate this process of working overtime, do you think?—I do not think it would affect it at all. It might stimulate it in the building trades perhaps; but then, as the men are paid extra rates for overtime, it is entirely in their province as to whether they accept it or not.

10. *Mr. Newman.*] Do you not think that the fact of there being more daylight for working in would be an inducement to have more overtime regularly asked for?—I should not like to give a decided opinion, because the future only could show. I do not know exactly how it would work, but I do not think there would be any pressure put upon the men to work too long hours.

11. *The Chairman.*] You believe that the more industry you can get carried on in the daylight, the better it will be for the general health of the community?—Yes, I think so. I think we are fools in departing from the ways of our forefathers in not going to bed when the sun goes down. Why should we ruin our eyes sitting up all night by electric light?

12. You consider it perfectly legitimate for the Government to put the clock on an hour if it is going to be in the interests of industry?—And health.

13. After all, it is not a breach of morality?—No, I think it is a very innocent deception. I look upon time as being an artificial convention altogether.

14. *Mr. McLaren.*] Are there many occupations in which the time of starting is 7 o'clock in the morning?—No, not very many. They almost wholly start at 8.

15. In country work, for instance?—Agricultural work commences as soon as the sun is up.

#### H. G. WARREN examined. (No. 6.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Whom do you represent?—The Employers' Federation. This resolution was passed yesterday: "That this meeting approves of the principle of the New Zealand Local Time Bill introduced by Mr. Sidey, and that a delegate be appointed to attend the Committee of the House to-morrow to state such approval." It was further agreed that I should be the delegate.

2. Now, will you make a statement in connection with the Bill?—At our meeting Mr. Sidey very kindly explained the provisions of his Bill, and his remarks were listened to with very considerable interest by the assembled conference. After Mr. Sidey withdrew, a good deal of discussion ensued, and the proposal contained in the Bill was unanimously accepted as of very great benefit from an industrial point of view to both the employer and the worker. A few members were rather doubtful as to its working in some directions, principally in connection with Press cables, but that matter was outside of the Employers' Federation, and we were all quite agreed that from a health point of view it would be a very excellent thing. What struck us more than anything was that after the first day nobody would be any the wiser. The clocks would be set and the people would get up at the same time as they used to and go to work at the same time as before, and they would not be any the wiser at all; but they would be gaining that extra hour of daylight, which would be of very great benefit, and which is now in nine cases out of ten spent in bed. Personally, I am interested in factory labour, and from that point of view I see very great benefits to both sides.

3. *Mr. Sidey.*] There have been differences of opinion expressed as to how the objects sought to be attained should be carried out. I mean, as to whether the people should alter their habits by starting work an hour earlier by the clock, or whether the clock should be altered. Do I understand that the conference affirmed the accomplishment of the object in view by the method proposed in the Bill—namely, by altering the time?—By altering the time of New Zealand—not by any voluntary alteration.

4. Your Federation represents the employers all over the Dominion?—The present conference represents some seven thousand employers.

5. *Mr. G. M. Thomson.*] Supposing that the Government agreed to the opening of the Government offices at 8 o'clock in the morning and the closing of them at 4 during the summer months, and your association passed a resolution recommending that all factories should be opened at 7 and offices at 8, do you not think the majority of your members would give effect to it?—You mean that the Government would not make any change in the Dominion time?

6. Yes, they would not alter the clocks?—I am not prepared to give an opinion about that, because that is apart from the question we were discussing. The main advantage of the whole Bill seems to be that the Dominion time would be altered—not merely in a few departments or industries, but there would be a general alteration of time in the summer. We are all aware that the present time in New Zealand is only a fictitious one. It would not make the slightest difference if it were officially wrong all over the Dominion, but it must be a general thing.