

ment (aa) provides "No deduction shall be made from the wages of any boy or any woman under eighteen years of age except for time lost through the worker's illness or default, or on account of the temporary closing of the factory for cleaning or repairing the machinery." I am asking that there should be inserted after "on account of," in the fourth line of the paragraph, the words "slackness of trade or." If you passed the proposed amendment to the clause you would be doing a very great wrong to all parties concerned. First of all you are going to compel an employer to pay for work that is not done. I submit that when industries are struggling under a heavy burden, any additional burden should not be imposed. In trades which are seasonable trades the busy season is the harvest time for both the employer and the worker. The one has the business to control, and the other has the work to do, and every hour that the employees work beyond the forty-five hours they get overtime. You say by this provision that the employer shall not only pay overtime during the busy season, but he shall pay for the time when he has not got work for his employees, and has not got the money to pay them with. We admit that there is a fairness in paying overtime rates for overtime work, but say that it is not fair to compel us to pay for time that is not worked at all. If this is insisted upon, it is going to have a very ill effect upon the workers. Take, again, the seasonable trades: The employer during slack times is going to pick out those who are the best, and dismiss all the others; because, after all, you can put that clause in, but cannot prevent a man from dismissing those who are engaged on a weekly wage. It will mean there will be a few chosen hands kept on, while the others are simply going to their work in the busy season, and have none at all the other time. It is going to be a little awkward for the employer, because when the busy time comes he is going to have some difficulty in getting his hands together; but it will throw the workers out of employment during the slack periods. In regard to the proposed amendment to section 38, subsection (3), we propose that the subsection should be deleted, as it will compel payment for other than statutory holidays. Subsection (3) seems to us as if it will compel payment for all holidays, statutory or otherwise. It applies to every boy under eighteen years of age and women under twenty-one years, and apprentices who are paid by time wages. It is not quite clear to us, but I think we are not very far wrong in supposing that it means payment for every holiday that may be proclaimed by the Governor, Mayor, or Chairman of any tinpot Road Board or Borough Council. You are going to let the employers into all this sort of thing. Mr. Hannah will tell you that it would mean £70 each holiday to him alone if these are to be paid for, and you do not know where it is going to lead. I have tried to express my views shortly on these matters, and I will leave it there. Mr. Hannah will speak in regard to section 4 and other matters.

PHILIP WILLS (representing P. Wills and Sons) examined. (No. 5.)

1 *The Chairman.*] Do you represent every laundryman in the city?—Two other steam laundries—Mr. Naismith, of Hopper Street, and Mr. Morris, of Daniel Street.

2. You have heard Mr. Pryor's statements: do you agree with what he has said?—Yes.

3. Is there anything you wish to add?—There is one thing in clause 3, "in every laundry in which two or more persons (whether employees or not) are engaged the following provisions shall apply": we think that every place where laundry-work is carried on for hire or reward should be deemed a factory.

4. It is, under the present law?—This says, two or more persons.

5. That is for a special purpose, but nevertheless it is a "factory" under the Factories Act. It provides for every laundry, whether they receive payment or not?—I mean, as far as this clause here is concerned. We consider that every laundry where work is done for hire or reward should come under the Factories Act, and that the whole building where the work is carried on should be deemed a "factory." I know the Inspectors here have had a difficulty in finding this out. With regard to those Chinese laundries, it is a very easy matter for them, if two are working together, to go singly; and there is nothing in the Act to prevent them that I can see. Then, with regard to those restrictions that are proposed at present, we are allowed to work provided the men are paid the overtime rates. We should not object to getting a permit, because we have to get one for the sake of the females and young lads. In our factory there are twelve men and a lad employed, and sixty-odd females. I am not in it myself, but, counting my own sons, there is a total of fifteen men. In the case of Mr. Naismith, he employs over fifty hands altogether. In the case of Mr. Morris, he does not employ so many. It is not a steam laundry, and there are no males there but himself. We do not want anything extra for the Chinamen, but we want them to come under the same laws and regulations as we are under. We do not want any extension of hours whatever—they are quite long enough—but we do not see why they should be privileged any more than we are, and consider that a Bill such as this would be giving a privilege to Chinamen and be barring Europeans. We want the cleaners and the men who get steam up to be allowed to work outside the specified hours. We have to employ a man to sweep up the place after the others have gone on Saturday afternoon, and of course the machinery must be looked after.

6. *The Chinese Consul.*] The Chinese do not ask to be given more privileges than the Europeans, but do you not think that the Chinese have the same right to ask the same privilege of the household?—Certainly not. A household is not under the Factories Act.

7. What is a "factory"?—It is usually a place where two or more are employed.

8. The Chinese simply ask to be treated equally with the small laundry places where there is a man and his wife or daughter; so that they have not asked for more privileges than they give to you?—You were asking to start at 7 in the morning and work until all hours of the night.

9. Do not Europeans do the same? I have heard of a small one where there are lines out until 12 o'clock at night?—I think, in justice to himself, he should lay an information before the Inspector. There is one other point, as representing the employers: if they are allowed to keep