

Bill are concerned?—That is a matter in which there is differentiation. If you ask that question in Auckland they will tell you “Yes,” and if you ask it in Dunedin they will tell you “No.” The conditions vary in the different centres. In Auckland the hotelkeeper’s busiest day is Sunday. The steamer arrives from Sydney with between three hundred and four hundred people; the steamer arrives from the south, and there is a coastal steamer arriving; and you have got the train arriving on Sunday morning—all pouring people into the hotels. In Dunedin, on the other hand, Sunday is the slackest day in the week. There is one steamer arrives from Lyttelton in the morning, and very few of these go to hotels, because such people come up by train. The steamer leaves in the afternoon for the Bluff, and she clears the hotels out in the afternoon. Then take Wellington: we have the same conditions as in Auckland, and in Christchurch it is the same. That is why I say that evidence ought to be taken from each place to show what obtains in the different centres.

26. Am I to understand, then, referring to this question of hours, that your statement to the Committee is that your staff can do no more in ten hours than they could do in nine?—I am not dealing with the hours; I am dealing with the holiday. It is twenty-four hours off—one day. You are asking me in connection with two hours reduction. That has got nothing to do with it at all. That two hours reduction is simply brought about by bringing into existence the twenty-four hours continuous holiday. I cannot deal with that now. I can deal with the holiday. I say that the holiday is going to seriously embarrass the hotelkeepers of New Zealand if this Bill goes through in its present shape.

27. Is it your opinion that you can get no more work out of your hands in each of the six days, if you give them the seventh day? Roughly speaking, you will get an extra hour a day from them?—Where?

28. You have sixty-two hours now for seven days in the week. Roughly, that is an average of nine hours a day. Under the Bill you would get ten hours work out of them for each of the six days?—We are supposed to.

29. You can get ten hours?—That is a question. I should not like to make a definite statement as to that.

30. You have power to do it?—But could we get it? You cannot deal with a hotel servant right up to quarter-hours; you cannot say to ten minutes what he does. You are asking me whether I could not get as much work out of a servant in ten hours as in nine. Take the housemaid. Some people will get out at 7 o’clock, and then the girl can easily be finished by 2 o’clock in the afternoon; but the next day, perhaps, some of the people will not turn out till 10 or 11 o’clock. It all depends on the exigencies of the business. Hotelkeeping is different from anything else. People come and go, and you have to be guided solely by what is obtaining in the twenty-four hours. The conditions vary every day in the week.

31. Your answer to my question, then, is that you do not get any more out of the servants?—If you like to put it in that way, I will say that we cannot get any more out of them.

32. Assuming that the number of hours worked by your staff was one hundred per week, would you consider that too many?—Yes.

33. Would not the arguments that you are bringing forward now apply just as well to a reduction if the number of hours worked was a hundred?—No, you must have a medium in everything.

34. *Mr. Davey.*] Your suggestion that the Bill should be hung up for a week has prompted Mr. Veitch to say that that means that the Bill cannot be put on the statute-book this year. That is so, is it not?—I take it that that is what it means.

35. Supposing the Bill were hung up in order to allow hotelkeepers in other parts of the Dominion to give evidence, would their evidence materially differ from yours?—I should say it would, because the conditions that obtain in Auckland and in Dunedin are totally different. While I have given you a concrete instance of one phase of the question, there may be many others.

36. But mainly, in your opinion, the evidence of other hotelkeepers would follow what you have said?—Possibly, yes. I am quite sure of it.

37. Then what would be gained by hanging the matter up for a week?—It would give them time to find out exactly what they have got to say about it and how it is going to affect them. I take it that the Legislature do not want to inflict any hardship on any one section of the community, and if we are going to have an extra expenditure of £400 or £500 put on us for wages, without our having a say, I consider that it will be a hardship.

38. You do not suggest that by legislation we can differentiate between the various cities in New Zealand?—No; I should not like to say what you can do. That is for you to say. But I should like you to hear their evidence and give them a chance to defend themselves.

39. You state that you employ on an average forty-eight hands. If this Bill passes you will have to give them twelve hours more than you give them now?—I shall have to give them one full day instead of a half-day. I shall have to give each one five or six hours more time off.

40. Which practically means, for forty-eight servants, twenty-four days for all?—Yes.

41. Will that cost you £15 a week?—To augment the staff so as to replace those that would be away would, in my estimation, cost me between £12 and £15. The extra wages would possibly come to between £10 and £12, and the balance would be for their keep. At the present time I board and lodge my staff, with very few exceptions—I suppose four or five at the outside—and to do this takes up all the available accommodation I have got for the staff. If I have to augment my staff by five or six, I cannot lodge them in my hotel, and I shall have to get accommodation for them outside, and that means another 5s. a week each. Altogether the extra expense will be brought up to about £15.

42. Supposing, for instance, two housemaids go off on one day?—I should not require to put two housemaids off on one day.

43. Well, say one housemaid goes off, and two men out of the kitchen, and the other five from the rest of the staff: would you have to get an extra individual for each of those positions?—Possibly not